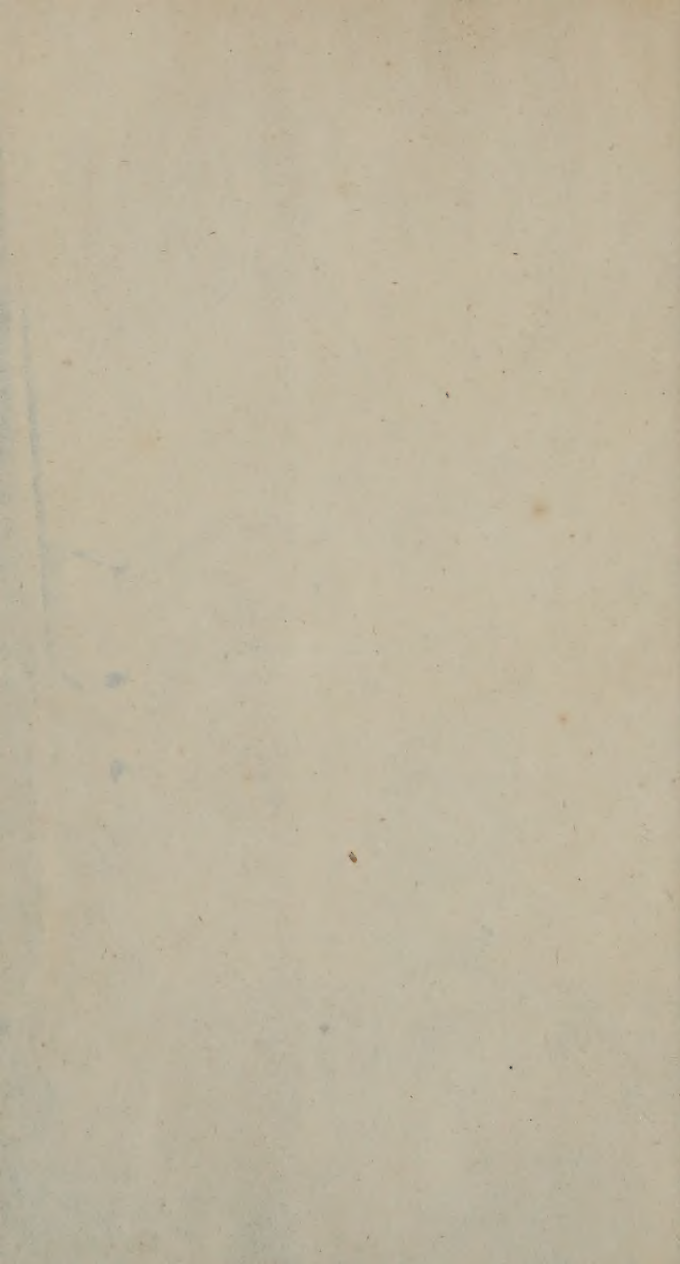






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THE
BIBLE CHRISTIAN:

DESIGNED TO ADVOCATE

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE,

AND THE

RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT,

IN

MATTERS OF FAITH.

VOLUME VI.

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VOL. VI.

ON ACQUIESCENCE IN POPULAR OPINIONS
AND PRACTICES.

THIS is one of those principles or propensities, on which men are content to act without arguing. They yield to its influence without pretending to defend it; or at most content themselves with some evasive apology. They say, What end would it answer to struggle against a torrent, that we cannot resist? What effect could a solitary voice produce in such a general clamour? How would the world be benefitted by our disgrace, or reformed by our singularity? Is it not better to sail with the current, and to join the general cry; and to live in harmony with mankind, than in discord and contention?

These plausible arguments are sometimes an apology for timidity; and at others, a cloak to vicious inclination; but whether the one or the other, they are equally inconsistent with manly virtue, pure religion, and the welfare of society.

One who values himself on dignity of mind and honourable conduct, looks to no human creature but himself for approbation, and no authority but God for his justification. He may respect the opinion of a virtuous friend; but he rather presumes to judge of the character, motives and conduct of the multitude, than admits them to be judges of his.

The multitude itself may lose character; and the opinion of a few virtuous and intelligent men may outweigh a whole theatre of others. A community may be more indebted for character to the approbation and sanction of a few individuals, than *they* to the community. The public have often been so far deluded, as to retain no character or authority at all. The Poet said presumptuously, if not impiously, that the gods favoured the victorious party, but Cato the unsuccessful; but he might have said without presumption, that the multitude approved of one line of conduct, but Cato of the other.

If it were not for the influence of a few respectable

persons, every thing would be at the disposal and arbitration of the basest impostors and the meanest of mankind. But this elevation of soul on the one part, and involuntary deference on the other, form a salutary check to the pride of numbers, and the arrogance of the popular voice ; and therefore this independence of spirit, when well founded, is not only respectable in the individual, but of essential service to the public itself. It is only, indeed, when sanctioned by such men, that the popular opinion is held in any estimation, by those who are independent of the violence of the rabble. If, indeed, we were not to look to a few select characters, where could we expect to find any wise, steady or virtuous rule of conduct ? The multitude may, and perhaps generally are, put in motion by some generous sentiment, or virtuous emotion ; but the spark that occasioned the explosion is soon lost in the blaze. Whatever claim the majority may make to good intention, they can hardly pretend to wisdom, or consistency. A well instructed and well principled man, therefore, instead of looking up to the multitude with admiration, will often look down upon them with pity ; instead of authorities for what he should *do*, he will consider them as examples of what he should shun ; far from applying to them for instruction, he will only look to them for warning. While he palliates their failings, errors, and prejudices, on the score of ignorance and passion, he will reflect, how ill it would become a man of principle and information, to fall into such error, to be enthralled with such prejudices, to be enslaved by such passions.

Now, if we are to suspect the authority of the multitude, when they are most confident of being right, if it is not wise to conform to them, when they are actuated by a generous impulse, what can exceed the folly of following them to do evil ? What does it concern any man of a virtuous and upright mind, how another acts ? Can the general concurrence of all the profligates on the face of the earth make that noble, which is base, or that contemptible, which before was honourable ? Does not such a combination in iniquity, and such an accumulation of guilt, only display the infamy, and the danger of following an evil example in more glaring colours ? Yet is there any thing more common, than to see men conforming to every frivolous custom, rather than be out of the fashion ; renouncing their most

confirmed principles of religion for fear of singularity; complying with every private vice, because every one does so, and betraying every public trust, because, if they do not plunder the public, another will? Nor is it uncommon to hear the same argument advanced in a different form, as a plea for neglecting what is right, as well as for perpetrating what is wrong. Why should I expend my time or money in the service of the public, or comply with the demands of the law, or promote salutary regulations in society, or attend to the wants of the poor, when no body else will? Such a person might be surprised to be told, that this is the very reason why he should; and that if every one attended to these duties, his assistance might be dispensed with; but he could not deny the force of the retort.

As to religion, can any thing be more insulting to its authority, more hostile to its design, more inconsistent with its precepts, than such principles of action? Religion says, "when sinners entice thee, consent thou not;" but the man of the world,—“when sinners abound, I will increase the number; the more they entice, the more freely shall I comply. I will cast in my lot among you; let us have but one purse.” While he prefers the praise of man to the praise of God, the religious man says,—“Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.” “If it seem evil to thee to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” In addition to this dignified language of the votary of religion, and in opposition to the mean servility of the time-serving hypocrite, we have the following awful warning of the Lord Jesus himself;—“Whosoever shall be ashamed of me or my words in an adulterous generation, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, with the holy angels.”

Let us now consider the influence of such maxims on the welfare of society: first, the beneficial influence of singular virtue, and then the pernicious effects of obsequiousness in sin.

It is impossible to describe in its full extent, the beneficial influence of singular virtue; but every one who attends to the principles of human nature, or the practice of the world, must see that it is very great. Its manifest and notorious influence is very extensive, but

its secret operation much more so. A person of decided and unostentatious virtue cannot appear, without being surrounded with a number of followers. The timid are encouraged—the wavering are confirmed—and the zealous are animated by his example. Even the vicious and irreligious are often converted, and atone for their former depravity, by an open avowal of their conversion. Those who were afraid of singularity, are relieved from their apprehensions, and emboldened in a virtuous course; and even those who cannot muster courage to appear openly in defence of morality and piety, are supported by him in adhering to their secret resolutions, and in their private approbation of his conduct and example. They will first venture to defend, and then be ambitious to imitate him. Thus as evil communication corrupts good manners, so good example will often reform bad ones; and surely whatever principle or motive, whether vanity, ambition, love of distinction and applause, or fear of contempt and infamy, can induce men to follow a multitude *to do evil*, the same must operate more powerfully in engaging them to follow a multitude to do good; and if these considerations have their weight, and these passions for honour and pre-eminence are gratified in making *one of a multitude*, they must be more effectually flattered by the superior dignity attending the individual, who distinguishes himself by his virtue from his fellows. The honour, which in one case is dissipated among a number, and participated with a multitude, must shine with greater splendour, and diffuse its rays throughout a wider sphere, when condensed and concentrated into one luminous point; and its lustre will be yet further augmented by the darkness of the surrounding space. Thus the sons of God shine as lights in a dark place; thus are they the light of the world; thus do they hold out the light of life in the midst of an evil world, and of a crooked and perverse, a sinful and adulterous generation; and thus will men see their good works, and glorify their Heavenly Father. Thus too shall they that turn many to righteousness, shine with the brightness of the stars for ever and ever.

This I think, will be admitted as true, on a general view of the subject; but were we to descend to particulars, it would appear much more so. Apply these observations to any point of duty, civil or religious,

political or private, and what can be more evident? No man that has paid any enlarged attention to human life, can doubt of the efficacy of a singularly good example in all our civil concerns, such as good neighbourhood, honour and punctuality in trade, compliance with such regulations as tend to the comfort of society, and liberality, according to the respective wants of our fellow-citizens, including tenderness to their frailties, compassion for their poverty and infirmities, and respect for their reputations. In nothing, however, can distinguished merit produce a more powerful effect than religion. If any man shall impress us with a conviction, that his exemplary piety is exempt from superstition and hypocrisy, and is the genuine source of his good deeds, it will be hardly possible to refrain from following his example. It will constrain us to emulate his virtues.

And as there is no branch of duty in which such an example would be more efficacious than religion, so there is none, in which it is more wanted, than in our political relations. The circle of our connexion as subjects of the same government is so extended, that our ties to each other in this respect are greatly relaxed; and it requires some extraordinary incentive, to make us feel the obligations of a common interest, and the conviction of a common duty. Patriotism or public spirit, is the intermediate link between the connexion of neighbours, and the relationship of fellow-creatures. It involves less affection than is felt by neighbours, and imposes more restraints than our general connexion with mankind. The relation of citizenship, therefore, is less endearing than the former, and interferes more with self-interest than the latter. It is, however, the relation, in which next to religion, singular virtue is likely to produce, and has always produced the most beneficial effects. If these be the situations in which our example is likely to produce the most *extensive* effect; our personal and domestic character is that, in which it will contribute most to our own happiness, and the happiness of those to whom we are most dear, and who should be most dear to us. On the whole, as weak and vicious people are too ready to comply with the opinion of the world, and the practice of their associates; so the enlightened and upright are not sufficiently independent of public opinion, nor sufficiently sensible of the power of example. While a man disguises his

character, and his religious principles, from a fear of singularity, he little thinks, how many more are actuated by the same principle; how many are ready to join his standard, if he would openly declare his principles; how many are discouraged by his timidity, from appearing as the friends of virtue and religion; and how little foundation there is for his dread of singularity, which is after all, a mere phantom, and bugbear; which, though no wise man will affect or be proud of, yet no man of common firmness will be ashamed of, or fear.

These truths would appear in a yet stronger light, were we to consider the ruinous effects of obsequiousness in sin, and compare the benefit resulting from one good example with the mischievous consequences that accrue from subserviency to vice. Whatever doubt may be entertained of the efficacy of a resolute adherence to principle, there can be none of the destructive effects of complying with the vicious maxims and practices of the multitude. When those elevated and upright characters, who are the pillars of morals and piety, are withdrawn, what can prevent the whole fabric from falling into decay? If *they* are hardly able to prevent or even check the progress of dilapidation, with what rapidity must it advance, if their weight be added to precipitate the ruin?

Think what would be the state of every department in society, if every one, instead of reflecting on what was right, would only consider what was common; instead of studying his own duty, were only to inquire how many violated theirs; instead of walking by the rule of integrity and faith, were to follow the multitude to do evil and to practise hypocrisy. How soon would this multitude become the majority of society; and then, what possibility of reformation would remain? Apply this to the purity of personal conduct, the fidelity of domestic relations, the charities of social life, the honour of the gentleman, the patriotism of the citizen, and the sincerity of the christian. Consider, I beseech you, how unequal to stem the torrent would that easy and feeble virtue be, which had glided down the stream: how unequal to the reformation of mankind would those religious principles be, which could not retard their depravation: and, above all, what momentous interests depend on a stubborn and unbending adherence to the

dictates of conscience and the laws of religion; and of what transcendant importance, those principles and laws must be, which alone can be opposed to the sophistry of passion, the seduction of example, and the current of popular opinion?

The example of the multitude is so poor and inadequate a motive, even for doing well, that it is impossible for any one seriously to consider it as a justification for doing evil. It is, in fact, never considered in this light even by the transgressor himself. It is sometimes indeed held out as an apology to the world, and to the indulgence of the world, at least, it has some pretensions;—for they cannot reject this plea without condemning themselves. They can hardly reprobate one, that professes to follow their own example. But, though the persons actually involved in the same guilt, cannot with any show of modesty or consistency exclaim against those who take them for their models, yet the public in general, like other great personages, are apt to treat their flatterers and servile imitators with contempt; and the sycophant and hypocrite are surprised, at last, to find that they have become despicable by those very qualities and practices, by which they confidently hoped to merit and obtain distinction. The precedent of the multitude, however, though it may fail in justifying us to others, is often fondly appealed to as an apology to ourselves. It serves, at one time, as an excuse for timidity; at another, as a cloak to vicious inclination; and sometimes as a screen for both together. While the just censure of the virtuous part of the community is slighted, men affect to stand in awe of the sneers of the vicious: the well founded applause of wise and enlightened men is overlooked, while they catch at the flattery of fools; and the imaginary reproach of the profane terrifies them, while the truly respectable and awful remonstrances of good men, and their own consciences are despised. There is so little appearance of reason in these frivolous pretences, that we may, without a breach of charity, suspect that they are only a thin covering to some real motive; that they are employed to hide from others the operation of some illicit desire; and that they are utterly incompatible with any resolute attachment, or even the most feeble and fluctuating partiality to virtue.

On this subject we meet with the following awful admonitions in scripture, “Be not ye conformed to the

world, but transformed to the renewal of your minds, that ye may know the will of God." Seek the strait gate, entered by the chosen few, and shun the broad way to destruction, though many go in thereat. Be on your guard against the vicious example of a sinful and perverse generation. "Come out from among them, O my people, that ye be not partakers of their sins; and that ye receive not of their plagues."

NEMO.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

THE following notes are partly extracted from an interleaved Greek Testament, which has been used as a repository for select criticism for many years. The remainder are either original, or selected from more modern critics. They are now printed without any view to controversy; nor are they accompanied with critical or doctrinal discussion. The sole object of the writer is to explain difficulties and obscurities in the language of scripture. They are chiefly designed for young and uneducated persons. Some of them, therefore, a scholar may esteem beneath his notice: others may attract the attention of the Biblical critic; and they may all be acceptable to the generality of readers. While they are thought to be so, the series will be continued.

As the texts are not quoted at large, the reader should have his Bible before him when he consults these notes.

ERASMUS.

The Italic character in the received version, shows that the words are not in the original, but supplied by the translators.

Heb. stands for Hebrew, Gr. for Greek, Gries. for Griesbach, and N. for Primate Newcome.

I.

THE GOSPEL [Gr. Good Tidings] ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

Saint is omitted in Griesbach's edition: it is a late addition, and signifies *Holy*.

THE LINEAGE AND BIRTH, BAPTISM, AND TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

V. 1. The book of the generation [the lineage or pedigree] of Jesus [Heb. Joshua; signifying to save, Ecclus. xlv. 1, Acts vii. 45, Heb. iv. 8] Christ [Gr. The Anointed] the son [the descendant] of David, the son of Abraham.

This is not the title of the whole Gospel, but of the following pedigree. It is similar to "This is the book of the Generations of Adam." Gen. v. 1. *Book* in Scripture signifies any writing, as, Jer. xxxii. 12, a deed of purchase; and *son* is used to signify any descendant.

V. 19. Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example.

Being a righteous man, he could not connect himself with her; and being a merciful man, he would not expose her to be stoned. Deut. xxii. 21. *Just* often signifies *kind*.

Ver. 22. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled, &c.

This phrase occurs often, but is never to be understood literally. Events do not come to pass to fulfil prophecies; but prophecies are given, because the event is to take place. It is a manner of introducing a quotation. The quotation may sometimes express allusion, or remarkable coincidence: sometimes be prophetic, or such as the Jews thought to be so, and expected to see fulfilled in the Messiah. The reader must judge for himself, consulting the corresponding passages in the Old Testament. Some translate it: *so that it was fulfilled*: others thus, *was done so as to fulfil*. See Matt. xxxiii. 26. Luke ix. 45, and xi. 50, in the original Greek. See Newcome for other authorities. See Matt. xiii. 35.

CHAPTER II.

V. 1. Bethlehem of Judea.

Where David was born, to distinguish it from Bethlehem of Zabulon.

V. 1. There came wise men [Magi] from the East.

V. 2. We have seen his star.

Any meteor was called a star by the ancients: as we also say a shooting or a falling star.

It was a luminous appearance in our atmosphere.

A heavenly body could not point out a house.

V. 2. To worship him.

To salute, or make obeisance to him. This is the meaning of the original, and was formerly, of the English word. See Luke xiv. 10.

V. 22. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither.

Archelaus was a wicked man like his father, and had the same cause for fear, viz. the birth of a king of the Jews. Antipas ruled in Galilee, and was of a milder disposition than his brother, and had less to fear from the birth of Jesus.

CHAPTER III.

V. 1. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea.

“In those days.” This phrase is used with great latitude in Scripture. See Exod. ii. 11. It means, while Jesus lived in Nazareth; 25 or 26 years after the return from Egypt.

“Wilderness of Judea;” a part of the country thinly peopled, but not desert. There were six cities with their villages in the wilderness, Joshua xv. 61. Jesse, father of David, lived in the wilderness. 1 Sam. xvii, 28.

V. 2. And saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

“Kingdom of heaven;” or that kingdom of righteousness, which the Messiah was about to establish on earth.

V. 3. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, &c. [See Isaiah xl. 3.]

This is an allusion to a custom in Eastern countries, of sending messengers and pioneers to make the ways level and straight before kings and other great men. They literally lowered mountains, raised valleys, cut down woods, and made every thing smooth and plain, for the great personage whom they preceded. This was done by John the Baptist or Baptizer for the Messiah, in a spiritual sense.

V. 4. And the same John had his raiment of Camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

His clothing was the same with that of Elias or Elijah, his prototype. See 2 Kings, 1, 8. Locusts were allowed to be eaten, Lev. xi. 22. They were boiled, dried, reduced to powder, and probably mixed in a cake with the wild honey, found in trees and rocks.

V. 7. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them; O generation [offspring] of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

The Pharisees were a sanctimonious and hypocritical; and the Sadducees an unbelieving and profligate sect.

V. 8. Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance.

Fruits becoming or according with a sincere repentance.

V. 9. And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Do not imagine that you are safe from the Divine judgment, on account of God’s promises to Abraham; for, though ye should all perish, God is able to raise up other children to Abraham, in the religious sense of the word; viz. the Gentiles, Rom. iv. 11, 16.

V. 11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

The carrying or untying of his master's shoes was one of the humblest offices which a domestic slave was called on to perform. The Jews say, "all services which a servant does for his master, a disciple does for his master, except unloosing his shoes."

He will confer the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and purify his disciples, as fire purifies metals. Or, with wind and fire; a figure taken from winnowing corn and burning the chaff, as follows, v. 12. The same word signifies *wind* and *spirit*, both in Greek and Hebrew. In English, *Ghost* was formerly of the same meaning with *Spirit* or *breath*; as, Give up the *ghost*; and *ghostly* with *spiritual*, as, "Defend us from our *ghostly* enemies," Common Prayer. *Ghost* and *ghostly* should now be every where translated *spirit* and *spiritual*.

V. 12. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge [cleanse] his [threshing] floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, [granary]; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

This fan was a broad shovel with which the corn was thrown up to the wind, and separated from the chaff, which was set fire to, and burned, that it might not be blown back by a change of wind, and mixed again with the corn.

V. 15. Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.

To comply with every divine institution, as John's baptism was.

V. 16. He saw the spirit of God descending like [in the form or after the manner of, see Luke iii. 22] a dove.

CHAPTER IV.

V. 1. Then was Jesus led up of [by] the spirit, [in a trance or vision] into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

The temptation is understood by some, as a real transaction: by others, as a vision resembling that described in Ezekiel, ch. viii.; the abode of Moses for 40 days in the mount, and the visions of Peter, Paul, and John in Revelation. Calvin, Bucer and others of a later date, considered it as partly visionary and partly real. Of those who take it for a vision, some ascribe it to a divine influence; and others to an evil spirit.

"Of the spirit," may signify, by the Holy spirit, or in a vision—as the phrase is often applied,—compare Mark xii, and Luke iv.

"By the devil" some understand a fallen angel; and others take it as a metaphorical expression. The literal meaning of the word is, *a false accuser*. See Rev. xii. 10, "For the accuser of our brethren is cast down;" but a different Greek word is there used for accuser.

V. 4. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, [or, by every thing which God hath appointed.]

V. 5. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple.

In Greek the word is *wing*, which is the original meaning of *pinnacle*. It was 30 feet higher than the principal building.

V.10. Get thee hence, Satan, [or thou adversary. Heb.]

Ver. 13. He came and dwell'd in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast.

Capernaum is situated on the North-west coast of the lake of Gennezareth ; which in the Old Testament is called the " Sea of Chinneroth," Numb. xxxiv, 11 ; but in the New Testament it is named the " Sea of Galilee," because that country formed part of its shore ; and also the " Sea of Tiberias," from the city of Tiberias lying on the South-west coast of it. The river Jordan runs through the middle of it. According to Josephus, (Bel. iii. 18) the length of this lake was twelve miles and a half, and its breadth five miles. It was only an inland lake, but is commonly called a sea. From the text it appears that Capernaum was not on the Galilean part of the shore.

V. 15. Galilee of the Gentiles.

A part of the Holy Land from which the idolatrous nations had not been expelled.

V. 21. They saw other two brethren in a ship [or vessel.]

In the New Testament any vessel is called a ship.

V. 23. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, [churches] and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom [or, the good news of the speedy erection of his kingdom.]

V. 24. They brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases, and torments, [pains and aches] ; and those which were possessed with devils, [demons] and those which were lunatic, and those which had the palsy ; and he healed them.

The word *devil* is never used in the original on this subject, but *demon*, by which were understood some other kind of evil spirits. The most learned of modern divines think, that demoniacs were persons who laboured under certain bodily diseases, particularly those of the maniacal, lunatic, melancholy, epileptic and paralytic kind ; which were popularly attributed to the agency of evil spirits.

Hewlett in his annotations on the Bible states the arguments for and against the figurative and literal interpretation of the temptation and demoniacal possession. With respect to the temptation he says, " It is well known, (says Bishop Porteus) that several ancient commentators, as well as many able and pious men of our own times, have thought that this temptation was not a real transaction, but only a vision or prophetic trance."

With respect to Demonism, he gives the following list of authors who prefer the figurative interpretation, " Jos. Mede, Dr. H. More, Dodwell, Lardner, the celebrated physician Dr. Mead, Wetstein, Professor Semler, Dr. Sykes, Dr. Arthur Young, Farmer, Bartholinus (in lib. de Morbis Bibl.) and many more."

(To be Continued.)

AN OUTLINE OF CHRISTIAN UNITARIANISM.

[The Editor of this Work having been called on to deliver a statement of the principles held by Unitarian Christians, to an auditory of whom many were unacquainted with the very name of the sect, except as a term of reproach,—the following discourse was composed for the occasion. It is now inserted in the *Bible Christian*, at the desire of some individuals, who are of opinion that its publication may assist in the diffusion of correct notions respecting the tenets which are embraced by the Unitarian denomination; and in the hope that it may thus tend to diminish prejudice, and to promote charity.]

ACTS xxviii, 22.

We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

We learn from the New Testament that the first professors of the Christian faith were frequently subjected to calumny and reproach. Their motives were misconstrued; their doctrines were misrepresented; and their characters defamed. They were accused of turbulence, violence, and sedition. They were charged with dishonesty, falsehood and fraud. They were denounced as heretics, infidels and blasphemers. Immoral practices and licentious principles were imputed to them; and their names were cast out as evil. The very title,—*Christians*,—by which they were commonly known, was originally given as a term of derision. The slanders which were heaped upon them, travelled faster and farther than the knowledge of their doctrine, even in that age of its unexampled diffusion; and there were many besides the Jews at Rome who had only heard of the Christian sect as one “every where spoken against.”

In modern times, Christians of Unitarian sentiments are exposed to similar reproach. Like our holy predecessors in the faith, we are “every where spoken against.” By one class of our fellow-citizens, we are, fourteen times in every year, solemnly devoted to everlasting perdition. Our leading principle must be abjured by every minister of every church around, before he can be ordained to the charge of any congregation, or even allowed to preach the Gospel. Besides these public testimonies against the truth of our doctrines, it is our misfortune to meet with numerous instances of calumnious invective, directed not against our opinions merely, but against our motives, and our religious character. We have been charged with concealment, hy-

pocrisy and fraud. It has been preached from the pulpit and circulated by the press, that Unitarians are only Deists in disguise;—that their religion is a mere modification of infidelity;—that their profession of Christianity is mere form and pretence;—that they are not willing to receive nor do they really believe, many of the declarations of that Bible which they pretend to adopt for their guide in matters of faith. It has been asserted, and the assertion has been widely disseminated, that the Unitarian, while he professes to feel gratitude, love and veneration for the Saviour of men, cherishes an extinguishable hatred and malice against him in his heart. Atheists, infidels, blasphemers, heretics, apostates, deniers of the Son of God, revilers and persecutors of the Lord Jesus, have been terms plentifully bestowed upon us. The frequency of these attacks, the language in which they are couched, and the number of places in which they are made, justify us in comparing our situation with that of the early disciples, as a sect “every where spoken against.”

I propose to shew that we ought not to be thus “spoken against.” I propose to shew that we do not deserve the reproachful terms in which we are so frequently mentioned. I propose to demonstrate, that we are not persons, whose contact brings with it spiritual pollution;—that we are not persons whom their fellow-citizens must exclude from the charities, the courtesies, and the softening intercourse of life;—that we are not persons whose souls are tainted with a plague-spot that would infect and contaminate the spirits of those by whom they should be admitted to the usual freedom and familiarity of society. I propose to shew that our characters are not thus dangerous,—that our opinions are not thus pernicious;—that our hearts are not thus corrupt;—that our feelings are not thus depraved. This object I propose to effect, at least in part, by plainly stating what are our real opinions, sentiments, and feelings, upon the principal articles of our belief; and by referring to a few considerations, which ought to mitigate, if not remove the odium in which our opinions are held.

My object in the present discourse, is to *state* the sentiments which Unitarian christians hold, respecting the leading doctrines of the Gospel. I shall briefly explain what these sentiments are, without attempting to urge any arguments in their defence. The statement

and proof of a religious system are essentially distinct. Both cannot be attempted in the compass of one discourse. The former is my immediate object at present, and to it I must confine myself. It will not therefore be taken for granted, that no arguments can be adduced in favour of the opinions which I am about to describe, because I refrain, for the present, from advancing any. I am compelled by the limits of this address, to abstain from urging any considerations in favour of the peculiar doctrines, held by Unitarian Christians; unless, indeed, the simple statement of them may, in some degree, serve to recommend them. To a certain extent this may be the case; for as there are opinions, which to mention is to confute; so there are others, whose simplicity, harmony, and scriptural character, are calculated to make a deep and permanent impression, although no express or formal proof may have been adduced in their support. This argument, if such it can be called, is the only one which I shall at present attempt to bring forward.

One farther observation before I enter on the main question. Unitarian Christians have no creed except the word of God; and in the interpretation of its contents each individual among them freely exercises his christian privilege, of searching the scriptures for himself, calling no man upon earth Father or Lord. They are not, therefore, precisely of the same mind, upon every subject of religious inquiry. They do not profess to have a perfect uniformity of sentiment among themselves upon all points. They do not regret this diversity. It exists without impeaching their mutual sincerity, or impairing their mutual charity. They regard such discrepancies of individual opinion as the fruits and guarantees of their individual liberty, and the stimulants of individual inquiry. They believe that notwithstanding these avowed discrepancies, they approach much more closely to a real uniformity upon important points than many of those churches which employ as their bonds of union, human creeds, expositions and articles. They believe that such creeds, articles and expositions have been, from their first introduction, snares to conscience, cloaks for insincerity, pretexts for persecution;—and accordingly they disuse them. They refuse to adhere undeviatingly to the opinions or the writings of any uninspired men. I cannot, therefore, undertake to speak of their sentiments and views, with or from authority. I can only

undertake to give a faithful account according to the best of my judgment, belief and knowledge. I by no means suppose that I can accurately express, upon all points, the sentiments of every individual who may be called, or may call himself, a Unitarian Christian. I have, however, a tolerably extensive acquaintance with the sentiments of my Unitarian brethren; and I shall certainly state nothing as the doctrine of the body, which is not agreeable to the conviction of the great majority of those who entertain Unitarian views, so far as my knowledge of their opinions enables me to judge.—This being premised, I proceed to state,—

I. THE OPINIONS HELD BY UNITARIAN CHRISTIANS, RESPECTING THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

We believe the Bible to be, emphatically, the Book of God. We believe that it contains a correct account of the successive and progressive revelations which Almighty God has been pleased, from time to time, to communicate to mankind. We regard its declarations as of the highest possible authority, in the decision of every matter both of faith and morality. We make it, on all such questions, our ultimate and decisive standard of appeal. We think ourselves bound to receive, and we do with gladness receive, whatsoever doctrines it contains, and approves. We think ourselves bound to reject, and we do willingly and submissively reject, whatsoever tenets it is found to condemn. All the religious opinions that we embrace, we have embraced because the Bible appears to us to teach them. All the religious opinions that we reject, we have rejected, because the Bible appears to us to refute them. Our faith is built on the only sure foundation of sacred scripture.

We carry our reverence for the sacred volume to a great length. We not only think it a sufficient guide for ourselves, but for all our brethren besides. We not only deem it sufficient for all the purposes of individual Christians, but for those of all Christian communities, societies and churches. We have, therefore, unanimously constituted the Bible, *our sole creed*. All human tests, confessions or standards, we unanimously and cordially disavow. We renounce their authority. We deprecate their use. “*The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,*” is our motto. We find the Bible amply sufficient as our bond of union and accredited creed; and

we seek not either to add to its contents, or to take away from them, by introducing any tests, overtures or supplements of our own. We should regard such an attempt, on our own part, as impious and absurd; and cannot view it as less censurable, when made by others. Accordingly we have entered and we do sustain a continued and consistent protest against the introduction of any creeds or articles of human composition, as standards of faith in the Christian church; for this among many other cogent reasons: that they serve to undermine the authority of sacred scripture, and give to other productions that efficacy and prominence, as a standard of reference, which is due exclusively to the holy volume.

So highly do we reverence the scriptures, that we feel ourselves, under a sense of imperious duty, compelled to study their contents, with all the patience, all the impartiality, all the diligence, and all the prudence that we can bring to the solemn and serious exercise. We think ourselves bound under a serious and solemn obligation, to call forth,—in the study of the sacred volume, for the purpose of acquiring religious knowledge and improvement,—all the powers of mind, and all the faculties of understanding with which God has blessed us. In other words, we feel ourselves bound to employ all our gifts of reason and wisdom, in the reading and the interpretation of the sacred volume. We think that without exercising the reason which God has bestowed upon us, we can never attain to a knowledge of the truths which the Bible actually teaches. We use reason in the interpretation of Scripture, simply as an instrument to assist us in coming to a knowledge of the meaning of the sacred writers. When that meaning has once been ascertained, we hold that the task of reason is fulfilled; and that she has nothing more to do, but to seat herself at the footstool of revelation, and to receive the lessons of divine wisdom, with the simplicity and docility of a child. So far are we from regarding reason as our highest teacher, that we merely employ it as an aid to assist us in learning from the superior source of knowledge,—divine revelation. In so doing we strictly comply with the precept of the Apostle,—“I speak as unto wise men, judge ye *what* I say.”

The employment of reason to assist us in investigating the contents and ascertaining the meaning of sacred scripture, is often made matter of charge against us by our

opponents. But most unjustly and inconsistently. It is unjust towards us, to impute to us as guilt, that which is simply an exercise of the faculties which God has given us, in a legitimate manner, upon a legitimate subject, and in compliance with an express injunction of the word of God. It is inconsistent also as respects our opponents themselves; for they do not hold themselves debarred from exercising all their understanding and all their ingenuity in propounding arguments by which their own system may be made to appear plausible. Their reasonings upon such subjects, are often of the most subtle and intricate kind. From a mere hint;—from the omission or the insertion of a monosyllable;—from a mistake of the translator,—or a fancied resemblance of one or two texts, which have no visible connexion,—they will deduce arguments the most conclusive, (as they affirm,) in support of doctrines the most important and most mysterious; and to their arguments or reasonings thus elaborately investigated, they will call on us to yield immediate assent, under pain of eternal damnation in hell. They are, therefore, very inconsistent with themselves when they condemn us for following a practice which they so freely tolerate in their own case. Let me not be mistaken in these remarks. Let it not be supposed that I censure them for thus exercising their ingenuity and critical skill. I do not complain of them *for reasoning*, but *for reasoning wrong*. I do not complain of them for exercising their understanding, but for perverting its use, and subverting its established laws.—It is only when reason is exercised by *us* that our opponents think its employment is inadmissible. They will freely employ it themselves; but when *we* presume to touch it with one of our fingers, they exclaim against us as guilty of combating with forbidden weapons. Indeed I never yet knew of any person condemning the employment of reason as an aid in religious inquiries, who had not first ascertained that his own arguments would not bear the test of rational investigation. No man is so apt to set himself against reason, as he who finds that reason is against him. In this point of view, our opponents do wisely in decrying the use of reason in religious inquiries, as a crime of no ordinary criminality. They would do well were they to abstain from placing before their partisans such examples as they occasionally afford, of the exercise of the human faculties, in the consideration of

scriptural arguments. Most assuredly if their opinions are to keep their ground, it must be by other means than those of fair and manly argument. If men can be but brought to think—to think freely and independently upon religious subjects,—the cause of our opponents is hopeless; and the sooner they give it up the better.

After these remarks on the authority and weight which Unitarians attribute to the sacred scriptures, I proceed to state,—

II. THE DOCTRINES WHICH THEY HOLD CONCERNING THE GOD WHOM THE SCRIPTURES DECLARE UNTO US.

We believe then that the Supreme Being is self-existent and eternal;—underived from any other source, and independent on any other power than his own;—that he is perfect in wisdom, understanding all the imaginations of every heart, and seeing the end from the beginning of time;—that his power is unbounded, enabling him to do all things possible, throughout the infinite of space and of duration; unshared by any rival and subject to no control;—that he is possessed of purity and moral holiness without a stain, and incapable even of the idea of contamination:—that he is unlimited in benevolence,—creating that he might bless, and ever blessing the creatures that he has made; and especially bestowing upon the race of man both the bounties of time and the hopes of eternity.—We believe that his providence is regulated by rules of consummate equity and wisdom, which will hereafter be acknowledged by the whole intelligent universe.

We believe that this Great and Glorious Being, the first cause, the original author, fountain and creator of all nature, is ONE,—absolutely ONE;—perfectly and entirely ONE. We believe that he is one being, one essence, one person, one entire, distinct and separate existence. We think that in all the revelations which he has given of himself and his ways, he has shown and declared himself to be One. We believe that he was revealed as one God, and one being only, to our first parents in Paradise. We believe that the Patriarchs were taught to regard him in the same light. We believe that to Moses, both before the giving of the law and in the law itself,—God who called him was uniformly revealed as One; and that the prophets, in succeeding generations, were inspired to recall, to

declare, and to confirm and establish the same great truth. Last of all, we believe that it was acknowledged, confessed and taught in the clearest terms by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his holy apostles and disciples : in whose writings we find frequent and express assurances that God is One ;—and that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the only true God.

We are not believers in the doctrine of the trinity. We do not believe that in the unity of the One God, there are three distinct persons,—the *Father*,—the *Son*,—or as it is now more fashionable to call him, the *Word*,—and the *Holy Ghost* ;—and that each of these is, by himself alone, God ;—while yet they altogether make not three Gods, but one God. We do not believe that while the Father is God,—the Son is also God, equal with the Father ; and the Holy Ghost, God, equal with the Father and the Son. In short we do not believe that the scriptures any where tell us that three are one, or that one is three. If there be such a declaration in genuine scripture—(for of spurious forgeries we make no account,)—let it be produced ; and the question will be decided at once.

I am perfectly well aware that our denial of the doctrine of the trinity is one of those circumstances which excite against persons of Unitarian sentiments the greatest odium and abhorrence. Indeed many of those who have risen to stations of dignity and emolument in consequence of their zeal on behalf of this mysterious dogma, do not scruple to represent our rejection of the doctrine of the trinity as an act of rebellion against the authority of God speaking in his word, and a virtual rejection of Christianity itself. And hence they have loaded us with reproaches, and assailed us with invectives, as persons who hypocritically profess to receive the scriptures for a rule of faith, while they obstinately and perversely reject the teaching of the Bible, upon this most important subject.

I am not now going to argue the truth of my own doctrine on this subject ; or the falsehood of the opposite one. This, I have stated, is not the object of the present discourse. But it is the object of this discourse, to show that we do not deserve to be “ spoken against,” on account of our opinions, as we are too frequently. And I say that before any man has a right to charge us with so heinous a crime, as that of making an insincere

religious profession,—a crime which we do most indignantly deny,—he must be able to prove that his own doctrine is the *plain, positive, and unequivocal declaration of sacred scripture*; and that the evidence of its being so, is of such a nature, *that it CANNOT POSSIBLY BE MISTAKEN by sincere and candid inquirers*. Now, I ask, if this can be the case with respect to the doctrine of the trinity,—*how does it happen that the doctrine has never yet been stated in scripture language?* It has been now the general belief of the multitude in the churches of Greece, Rome, England, and Scotland, for many centuries. Learned eyes have been poring over the sacred page, during all that time, anxiously on the watch to discover the slightest hint, the most distant allusion, the barest possibility of a reference to the doctrine of the trinity. How then does it happen, that not one passage, *as is confessed by their own advocates, without a dissenting voice*,—not one passage has been found, in which the doctrine of the trinity is expressly declared?—How does it happen, that some of their most popular writers, have not only admitted, but affirmed, that the doctrine of the trinity is not a doctrine of express revelation, but one of mere inference; so that in receiving that doctrine as true, men do not rest their faith directly on the word of God, but on the soundness of their own deductions? And if our Unitarian doctrines be so manifestly false, as they ought to be, before we should be exposed to public odium, and held up to view as persons unfit to be associated with in private life, on account of our opinions; how comes it that these doctrines, if they are so manifestly false and unscriptural, can be expressed over and over again, *in the very words of divine revelation!* I state this fact, not for the purpose of proving the truth of our opinions, but as sufficient to remove the unjust odium under which we labour. The fact is briefly this,—that the leading doctrine of Unitarian christians, (*viz. THAT THERE IS ONE GOD THE FATHER,*) can be stated in upwards of *twenty* different ways, and every time in the plain, express, and unaltered words of sacred scripture;—whereas, the doctrine of our opponents, which is, that *there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, *has never yet been stated, and cannot be stated*

in the words of the New Testament. If this assertion be doubted, I would recommend any persons who may feel curiosity on the subject, to apply to any Trinitarian minister of their acquaintance; and they will find that he will speedily be obliged to admit the fact. Or if they will look into any of the most approved writers in defence of the trinity, it will be found that what I have now declared, is literally correct. *The doctrine of the Unitarians can be stated in scripture language, at least twenty different ways. The doctrine of the Trinitarians cannot be stated in scripture language so much as once!*

If, then, it were lawful for any individuals to make use of personal reflections, sarcasms and imputations in religious controversy, it is manifest, that in this instance, *not our opponents, BUT WE*, should be authorised to employ them. If his rejection of the teaching of the sacred scriptures, justifies a man's opponents in branding him as an infidel, we, who adhere to the plain assertions and explicit declarations of the sacred volume, might be authorised to affix that stigma on our Trinitarian opponents. For they hold an opinion concerning God, *which they cannot express in scripture language*; and the statement of which they must borrow from human creeds, catechisms and articles. And were we to act upon this presumption, we might brand them as *atheists, infidels, heretics; deniers of the only true God; idolators, polytheists, and apostates!* And advancing still farther in the march of intolerance, we might revile them as *pompous hypocrites, and specious impostors*; who for the purpose of obtaining place, popularity or power, professed to maintain a tenet which they did not really believe, and deluded the multitude around them, by flattering their prejudices, and turning their ignorance to good account in the promotion of their own selfish advantage. My brethren, I am far from throwing out such insinuations upon our theological opponents. I know very well that many of them do not deserve them. I know very well that we ought to have strong and convincing proof of any man's falsehood and dishonesty, before we allow ourselves to suspect his sincerity. I know very well, that if I were to cast such indiscriminate aspersions upon Trinitarian ministers or people, I should justly draw down upon myself a severe condemnation; *and more severe from none, than from those who think with myself.* But the line of argument

which I have followed, proves, I think, convincingly and clearly, that if it be improper, (as I admit it would be,) in Unitarians, to cast such imputations upon their opponents, it is still more improper and unbecoming in their opponents to cast such aspersions upon them. I trust, therefore, you will remember the fact on which this argument rests; and that a conviction of its UNDENIABLE TRUTH, will restrain you from joining in such aspersions yourselves, whether you may agree with us in opinion or not; and lead you not to give implicit credence to any such violent and abusive language, as is sometimes vented against "the sect that is every where spoken against," both in private society, and in more public and elevated situations. Remember, when you hear such aspersions, that Unitarians are the only sect of christians who adhere strictly to the simple declarations of the Bible, respecting the "ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL," in the very language of the sacred writers themselves, without any addition or amplification: and that this is more than the boldest among Trinitarians will venture to say for themselves. Keeping this fact in mind, though you may not embrace our opinions, you will at least do justice to our motives, and to our characters.—I now proceed to specify,—

III. THE OPINIONS OF UNITARIAN CHRISTIANS RESPECTING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

They believe, own, and accept him as the Saviour sent from God. They hail him as the well-beloved Son of the Father; who, for the salvation and happiness of men, voluntarily undertook the painful, difficult and too often thankless office of reconciling sinners to their God. They believe in his incarnation, birth, miracles, doctrines, prophecies, and promises; in his labours, trials, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension, as these are recorded in the writings of the New Testament. They believe that the spirit of God was poured upon him without measure; that he spoke and taught with divine authority and power; that all the counsels of heaven respecting the improvement and happiness of the human race were communicated to him, and were by him explicitly revealed to men. They believe that he taught nothing but pure and perfect truth in his instructions;—that he demonstrated the reality of his claim to be a divine teacher, by signs and wonders and

mighty deeds, which no man could have done except God were with him;—and that it is the duty of all men to receive his instructions with attention, reverence and submission;—to embrace all the doctrines which he propounded;—to obey all the precepts which he delivered;—and to endeavour to imitate the character which he displayed. They look towards the Saviour with profound admiration, on account of the matchless excellence, and that incomparable moral sublimity, which his conduct uniformly exhibited. They look towards him with reverence, on account of the high commission with which he was invested, and the unexampled powers with which he was entrusted. They look to him with gratitude on account of the unspeakably great blessings of which his mission has been productive. They look to him with affectionate attachment and love, on account of the appalling sufferings which he unshrinkingly endured, for the redemption of the world unto himself, and unto God, from the slavery of vice; that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Lastly, they look to him with confidence and veneration, as their Mediator in Heaven, who is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where he ever liveth to make intercession for his people; and as the appointed judge who shall hereafter, in the name and with the authority of his heavenly Father, pronounce sentence upon the good and upon the bad, and before whose tribunal they and all men shall hereafter appear.

But though they thus acknowledge his divinity, they do not profess to believe in his deity. Highly as they revere the Saviour who died for them,—and greatly as they honour him,—and deeply as they love him,—they do not regard him as “God, *equal with the Father.*” They cannot find it any where recorded in scripture, that he declared himself to be God equal with the Father;—much less that he asserted himself to be,—according to the astonishing and most unscriptural language that is now so frequently employed,—the Supreme Deity. On the contrary, they believe that he declared *his Father to be greater than he*; and therefore ranked himself as *less than* his Father. Unitarians also believe, that the pages of the New Testament abound with either direct assertions, or manifest intimations of this fact; insomuch that they are willing to

rest the truth or falsehood of their creed respecting the Son of God upon an examination of *any one book in the whole collection*; and to be judged by the declarations which it contains upon this point. Unitarians also believe their Lord and Saviour to be one: one person, one mind, one thinking being, one individual agent. They think that in his conversations and public discourses, he uniformly spoke of himself as *one*; applying to himself modes of speech which are universally employed to denote a single intelligent agent, without giving any intimation that his language was incorrect, or that he employed it any other than the common meaning. "*I did proceed and come from God.*" "*I tell you the truth.*" "The word is not *mine*, but his that sent *me*." "He shall know of the doctrine, *whether it be of God*, or whether *I speak of myself*." "To sit on my right hand and on my left hand, *is not mine to give*." In these instances, and throughout the whole course of his ministry, our Saviour, in speaking of himself, made use of the usual forms and customary expressions, which are employed to denote one simple, uncompounded, intelligent being; and gave no notice that the case was different with respect to himself, or that he used these words in any other than their common acceptation. Unitarians have not been able to find any instance in which our Lord Jesus Christ said, "*this I speak in my human nature only; that is true in my divine nature*; another declaration I have made in my *complex* nature, as God and man united in one person." Unitarians are not able to find such expressions in the sacred scripture; and, therefore, consistently with their protestant rule of faith, which is the sufficiency of the holy scripture, *they reject the doctrine of two natures united in one person for ever*, in the Lord Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and men.

They know very well that their rejection of this doctrine is by their opponents attributed to the worst possible motives. They know that they are accused of a desire to degrade the Son of God below his proper level in the scale of existence; and some have even gone so far as to assert in so many words, that "*every Unitarian hates the Lord Jesus in his heart*," and employs every engine and artifice to rob him of his crown of glory. Now I appeal to all unprejudiced men, of every sect and party, whether this charge can, by possibility, be true!

Is it possible that men could be so desperately hardened in their hearts and so blinded in their minds, as to allow themselves for one moment to act under the influence of motives so vile and so abominable? What could possibly induce Unitarians to harbour such a desire as that of disparaging, degrading, and vilifying the Saviour who died for them;—through whom they have access by one Spirit unto the Father;—and by whom they are to be judged hereafter? If indeed they could hope to advance themselves in the world by treating their Saviour with contempt, there would be some sense in the accusation. But since they can promise themselves neither fame, nor influence, nor wealth, nor popularity, nor power, by such a course;—since it brings no increase of dignity or happiness in this world;—and since if they acted under such malignant motives, they could only expect to meet with punishment in the world to come;—to accuse them of acting thus, is to accuse them of having lost their senses. The wildest maniac would, on this supposition, be competent to teach them lessons of prudence. To suppose them to be guilty of acting thus, is to suppose them to be at the same time the greatest knaves and the greatest fools in existence. And, since the persons who throw out these false, unfounded, and injurious aspersions upon our motives, can have no reason to complain if we take the liberty, in our turn, of looking a little into *their* hearts, I do hereby plainly declare, not only that such a charge is **TOTALLY AND ABSOLUTELY FALSE**, but that I am convinced *those who make it do not themselves believe it*; and that they advance it only for the purpose of throwing odium upon the Unitarian body, and at the same time ingratiating themselves with the unthinking multitude, by flattering their prejudices, and working upon their credulity. I repeat, that the charge thus brought against Unitarians is **TOTALLY AND ABSOLUTELY FALSE**;—and that far from wishing to degrade and vilify the Saviour of the world, we willingly and joyfully receive and believe all things that are written concerning him, in the law, the prophets, the psalms, and the New Testament. And if we decline to pay him any acts of reverence and worship, of a religious kind,—it is merely and solely because we are firmly convinced that these are, by the sacred writers, exclusively appropriated to the Being who is his Father, and our Father, his God and our God; and because we see abundant

evidence in the history of our Lord's life, for believing that from such acts of religious worship he would have shrunk back with horror! Worship addressed to him under such circumstances, would really be mockery, insult and degradation. And if,—entertaining these views and convictions,—we dared to commit the shocking impiety of paying to him any divine honours, we should then,—*but not otherwise*,—be justly chargeable with manifesting disrespect and contempt for our Saviour; and with audaciously trampling under our feet both his services and his commands.

I shall now state, as briefly as the importance of the subject will permit,—

IV. THE VIEWS WHICH UNITARIANS ENTERTAIN, RESPECTING THE SALVATION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.

They believe that the end and object of Christ's mission, was the salvation of sinners. They believe that he came on earth to effect a moral deliverance; to free men from the bondage of vice and crime; and bring them into a state of subjection and conformity to the law of God, which is the law of liberty. They believe that he was called JESUS, or *Saviour*, because he should "save his people *from* their sins," not *in* their sins; and that his design was "to redeem mankind from all iniquity, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." They believe that the means, which for this purpose he employed, were most admirably accommodated to the end in view; addressing themselves powerfully and persuasively to the heart as well as to the understanding: and that they are calculated to engage the affections as well as the convictions of the believer on the side of virtue and pure undefiled religion. Unitarian Christians have uniformly, in the consideration of this subject, given a preponderating weight to the death which their Lord and master voluntarily endured, on behalf of the human race, and for the good of mankind. Viewed in connection with his miraculous resurrection and ascension, it affords the clearest proof which was ever given that his mission was indeed divine, and his authority derived from on high. Contemplated as an example, it demonstrates the possession of a soul so far removed from all the influences and passions of the world,—so superior to its hopes, its fears, its trials and its pains,—that if the same spirit could be infused into

the breasts of professing Christians, vice would stand abashed; sin, and sensuality, and profaneness, and indifference, would be confounded and destroyed; the law of God would become the universal rule of life; and a regard to his holy and righteous will, would be the paramount motive; so that truth, holiness, virtue and piety would prevail throughout the length and breadth of Christendom. And when the death of our Lord is viewed as conveying an appeal to our sympathies and grateful affections;—when we see the hands that had dispensed so many acts of mercy, and the feet that had borne him about on his mission of compassion throughout the land of Judea, pierced with nails and fastened to a bloody tree;—when we behold the head that ever teemed with plans for the improvement and happiness of our race, crowned with a chaplet of thorns,—and the bosom that heaved with condescending compassion to mankind, thrust through with a spear,—we feel our hearts engaged to the cause of our Saviour and the honour of his name, by ties of love more durable than chains of adamant. We believe that the mission, labours, trials and sufferings of Christ originated in the free, unpurchased, and unpurchaseable mercy of Almighty God; who, in compassion for the race of Adam, was mercifully pleased to devise and employ these means for their recovery and salvation. We believe that it required no external act, agent or inducement to render him placable, or dispose him to extend forgiveness to his penitent children. So far from regarding any part of the conduct or character of our Lord Jesus Christ, as having produced any change in the divine mind, or as having either inclined or enabled the Almighty to accept into favour persons whom he would otherwise have been disposed or obliged to condemn, we consider the whole scheme of Christianity as the fruit and the pledge of his own inherent goodness and benevolence.

We believe that as God is the universal parent, his plans of mercy embrace in their purview, the whole of his large family. We do not conceive that the favour of God is confined to any class or description of persons upon earth. We firmly trust that it is extended to all of his offspring who cultivate their talents well, and who make a suitable improvement of their religious advantages and opportunities, whatsoever they may be. It is needless to add that we believe it is in the power of all

men thus to cultivate and improve their talents, if they please. We are convinced that God requires nothing of his creatures which he has not given them strength to perform ; nor will he condemn any hereafter for not doing that which, either by the inherent corruption of their nature, or by an irreversible decree, it had been rendered utterly impossible for them to perform.

We do not, therefore, believe in the doctrine of Original Sin. We do not believe that by the transgression of Adam and Eve in Paradise, nearly 6000 years ago, all mankind have lost both their righteousness and their strength ; so that, on account of that transgression, in which they had no share, and to which they had never consented, they are made fit objects of punishment in this world, as well as subjected to eternal torment in the world to come ; while at the same time they are disabled, indisposed, and utterly made opposite to all good, and that continually. We do not believe in the doctrine of election, as commonly taught. We do not believe that some men and angels, are, from all eternity, by an absolute and unchangeable decree, out of God's own free grace and favour, and without the knowledge or foresight of any thing in the creature moving him thereunto, in an arbitrary manner, elected, or chosen, to the enjoyment of eternal life ; so that they cannot fall away from grace, notwithstanding all the sins they may or can commit. And we do not believe, on the other hand, that all the rest of the world are doomed to inevitable destruction, notwithstanding all that they can think or do to avert it ; and that all this is to be done for the praise of God's glorious justice. The doctrines, therefore, of election and reprobation, Unitarians utterly reject.

They likewise reject the doctrine of satisfaction,—vicarious punishment,—propitiatory expiation,—imputed sin and imputed righteousness, as applied to the death of Christ. They do not believe that the sins of all the elect from the beginning to the end of time, were imputed to Christ, though he did no sin himself : so that he was justly punishable for those sins, and made an ample satisfaction for them to divine justice, and thereby exempted their authors from chastisement, without any effort or services of their own. Unitarians do not believe that the righteousness of Christ's obedience to the law of God, is transferred from himself, and imputed to the persons of the elect ; so that they become,

by this imputation of another's merit, entitled, in strict justice, to the enjoyment of eternal life, as their earned and purchased reward. Unitarian Christians think this doctrine represents God as vindictive, inflicting punishment on the innocent, not for the correction or the determent of offenders against his law, but in order to gratify his thirst of vengeance. They think the doctrine of satisfaction makes the Supreme Being implacable, and robs him of the attribute of mercy, depriving him of the power of freely forgiving so much as one single sin. They think it is as injurious to man as it is dishonourable to God; seeing that it provides a *substitute* for the possession of personal religion and godliness; a thing of which the deceitful hearts of men have been in all ages too prone to avail themselves, in every form in which such a substitute has been presented.

Unitarians, therefore, are not Calvinists. They do not believe in all the doctrines contained in the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England; nor in all the statements of the Westminster Confession of Faith. But this need not excite much astonishment, nor give rise to any peculiar bitterness against them. They are not the only persons who assume the liberty of inquiring into the scriptural foundation of these formularies; and of rejecting their authority when it is found to be opposed to that of the New Testament. Some of the most able opponents of the doctrines contained in these creeds, have been men who had themselves subscribed them, and who were members of churches in which adherence to them was enjoined. It is my firm belief, that if the persons called and calling themselves *orthodox*, could be prevailed on individually to state their religious sentiments, it would be found that a large majority of them are not less averse to several very important articles in these symbols, than are the Unitarians.

Unitarians, in common with other Christians, look forward to a state of retribution, after death. They believe that in this future state, the good will be rewarded and the vicious subjected to punishment. They are therefore urgent in persuading their fellow-mortals, to repent and turn to God, and flee from the wrath to come. While they believe that without holiness no man shall see God, they are not less firmly convinced that he who cometh to God shall in no wise be cast out. The great object with Unitarians is to engage themselves and

others to the performance of the Christian duty of living soberly, righteously and piously. It is a mistake of our principles to suppose, and a misrepresentation of them to assert, that we confine the obligations of Christianity, or limit our own endeavours, to the discharge of the duties which men owe to each other. The obligations of personal purity and temperance, the necessity of humility, vigilance and love to God, piety and prayer, are by us frequently and strenuously urged. Whatever may be the practice of some among us, (and we do not assert it to be better than is that of others,) our faith is in this respect blameless. We believe that without the cultivation of these virtues, we shall not be fitted for the happiness of the world to come, nor admitted to partake it. But we do not expect to merit heaven by our best obedience. The idea of the merit of human beings, as giving them a claim of right to acceptance on the part of their heavenly Father, is one which never entered into our minds. We look entirely to his mercy and compassion for salvation. We know that we cannot be profitable to him; but we are assured that with the sacrifices of those who serve him in sincerity, he is well pleased. Nor do we rest on the outward act alone. We know that God searcheth the heart, and demands its affections as his due. We regard the outward act as important only because it indicates the state of the heart; but yet so important that it is declared in scripture that God will reward every one according to his *deeds*; and that they that have *done* good shall come forth to the resurrection of life; but they that have *done* evil to the resurrection of damnation. In the principles which we hold on these subjects, when our views are correctly apprehended, there is nothing to excite the horror of our fellow-christians; nothing that can be turned into matter of reproach against us, unless by ignorance or malice.

I have now concluded a brief and imperfect outline of the leading doctrines of the Gospel, as held by Unitarian Christians. The nature and necessary limits of this address will not allow me to go into detail; but so far as I have gone, I have endeavoured to state the sentiments of my Unitarian brethren correctly and fairly. One thing, however, I must add, in justice to their feelings and to my own. We prize the truth; but we value human improvement in righteousness and happiness, still more highly. We preach and enforce our

views of religious truth chiefly because we believe them to be eminently conducive to this grand object. But we endeavour to promote it by other means, as well as the exhibition of our peculiar doctrines. We employ for this purpose all the resources of practical exhortation, and solemn appeal which are at our command. Our aim and end in all our preaching is to win sinners unto God. The conversion and salvation of a single soul appears to us infinitely preferable to the clearest and most convincing elucidation of any abstract truth. Our preaching, therefore, though sometimes doctrinal, is seldom controversial. With us the worst of all heresies, is a wicked life: and the most important controversy is that which we wage incessantly against sin.

The doctrines of Christian Unitarianism may appear to you, when thus stated, much less offensive than they have been represented to be; and perhaps you will meet with persons who may attempt to depict them in a different light from that in which I have placed them. If so, I demand, on the ground of common right, that you will not take the statement of our tenets from the mouths of professed opponents; but from our own declarations. You would naturally exclaim against the injustice, were any one to impute to you opinions which you disavowed, or principles which you held in abhorrence. All that I ask of you is to extend the same measure of fairness and impartiality to Unitarians, that you would demand for yourselves. There is no artifice, sophistry or misrepresentation, which has not often been employed, in order to impugn the motives and blacken the characters of those who hold the system which has been described in this discourse. It is therefore the part both of justice and wisdom to form your opinions respecting the tenets in question, not from the assertions of avowed enemies, but from the writings and testimony of those who have embraced our principles, who understand them best, and are most capable of explaining them correctly. When you have thus learned what are the doctrines of Christian Unitarianism, you will be able to judge whether they are such as will justify the clamour and outcry which have been excited against those by whom they are professed. It is my confident expectation that they will be pronounced undeserving of that unsparing rancour with which they have often been assailed. It is my firm belief that were they better understood, they would be less fre-

quently and less severely "spoken against." I therefore hope and trust, that all impartial men who may witness any outbreakings of zeal against us, not according to knowledge, will employ the influence of their character, to check the assailant, and repress the misrepresentation. I trust they will prove to any person who may be thus forgetful of the laws of charity and candour, that such excesses, as they are unwarranted on our part, are unacceptable to them.

In this discourse, I have stated my own views openly and freely; but, I trust, without just ground of offence to those who are of a contrary opinion. Towards theological opponents, I entertain no sentiments that are inconsistent with charity and affection. I now leave the statements which I have made, to the judgment of the inquiring mind; to be weighed and compared with the authoritative standard of truth, the Word of God. If, after such examination, carefully and impartially conducted, the doctrines of Unitarian Christianity commend themselves to any man's reason and conscience, as true, I would earnestly call upon him,—disregarding the fear of human censure, and the love of human applause, and the desire of temporal things,—to embrace them, profess them, and hold them fast. And I would charge all my Christian brethren, as they regard the interests of their immortal souls, to remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ;—*"Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of Man also be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels."* *"Whosoever shall confess me before men, I also will confess him before my Father who is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven."*

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—The following verses written by a young lady, were read at a meeting of a society, recently formed in this city. The society consists of several families who assemble together at each other's houses in rotation, for the purpose of combining the pleasure of social intercourse, with the advantages of mental improvement. At each meeting, some work of a distinguished author is appointed to be the subject of reading and conversa-

tion at the next time of assembly. Original compositions, also, are occasionally given in by the members. Of these the following little poem is a very creditable specimen; and as it is written on a subject interesting to the feelings of all, it will doubtless be acceptable to the readers of your valuable publication.

Your inserting them will oblige,

Yours very sincerely,

Dublin, 15th January, 1835.

A CONSTANT READER.

WRITTEN AT THE CLOSE OF 1834.

A year has departed; o'er life's rolling tide
 It has swept like the fleet winged wind,
 And has left of its tumult, its triumph, its pride,
 But an echoing murmur behind.
 Thus far it has borne, by the power of its breath,
 Our bark o'er life's billowy sea;
 More near to the dark, dismal portals of death,
 That ope on eternity.
 But calm was our voyage! How gentle the blast
 That swelled every sail which we spread!
 How gladsome, how dancing, the waters we past,
 As swift o'er their bosom we sped!
 How bright o'er our heads was the wide arched sky!
 If a cloud dimmed the smile that it wore,
 The quick coming breath of the year chased it by—
 And we sailed 'neath its light as before.
 But the year now is past,—and while riding life's waves
 With the radiance of pleasure around,
 We have seen it haste on to oblivion's dark caves
 Where those that preceded, lie bound.
 'Tis gone!—and I'd weep and lament for its death,
 But we welcome a new year's birth;
 'Tis fanning our brows with its young infant breath,
 And wooing to laughter and mirth.
 But hark! through the gladness, a voice meets mine ear!
 "Stay, child of mortality, stay!
 Reflect for an hour, at the close of the year—
 Ere thou hastest to pleasure away!"
 Oh yes—let me pause!—Life's ocean how wide!
 How deep and uncertain its wave!
 How feeble the bark in whose fabric I ride,
 O'er waters, that must be my grave!
 Great Lord of the year,—of life's ocean, and man!
 Be my guide on this perilous sea—
 Lead me on, till I've journeyed my life's measured span
 In trust and dependance on thee.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

NO. VIII.

[Continued from vol. V, p. 546.]

I. CORINTHIANS.

THERE was an epistle written by Paul to the Corinthians prior to this, but it has not been preserved. It is to this letter that allusion is made in c. 5, v. 9, "I wrote unto you, in an epistle, not to company with fornicators." The study of this epistle ought to be preceded by reading the 18th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, in which we have the history of the formation of the church by Paul. We derive from it the knowledge of the important fact, that the church consisted of two opposite parties, the Jewish-Christians and the Gentile-Christians; and we find that there was a strong disposition to strifes, divisions and separations under different leaders, for which Paul reproves them, in the third chapter of this epistle.

It contains a remarkable proof of the little weight to be ascribed to the inscriptions at the end. It is there said to have been written from Philippi; and yet, in the 8th v. of the 16th chap. Paul declares "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost." It also contains proof of what was asserted in the preliminary remarks prefixed to the extracts from Romans, in a former number, that Paul alludes in his letter to information about his correspondents communicated by travellers in conversation. Thus in i. 11. "for it hath been declared unto me by them which are of the house of Chloe, &c," and in xi. 18, "for first of all when ye come together in the church *I hear* that there be divisions among you." There are also allusions to instances of great impropriety of conduct and of disregard to Paul's advice, all which circumstances concur to prove that though the primitive Christians were vastly superior to the disciples of modern times, yet the apostles did not use their supernatural powers in order to prevent the admixture of corrupt members, or the adoption of unholy practices; but that then, as well as now, there were included in Christian churches or congregations, persons of different shades of moral and religious character: that there was no way of distinguishing these but by their conduct; and that when this became so flagrant as to cast a slur upon the society, it was the duty of that society to disown the disreputable member.

The first four chapters are occupied with the subject of the parties and factions that had arisen among them, and the light in which they were to look upon the Christian minister :—the fifth and sixth with directions about the incestuous man, and with sharp reproofs for bringing their disputes before heathen magistrates. In the 7th chap. he treats of marriage, and in the 8th, 9th, and 10th, of Christian liberty and its modifications, according to the circumstances of the case. In the 11th, after a discussion, in which we are not much interested now,—the covering or uncovering of the head in worship,—we have that very important narrative of the institution of the Lord's Supper; important, not merely as being a very strong precedent for the simplest mode of administering that ordinance, but as proving that it was intended to be of perpetual observance in the church of Christ. We have no very direct interest in the remarks on spiritual gifts contained in the early part of the 12th chapter, but we feel pleasure and derive instruction from the very beautiful illustration drawn from the members of the human body; and we never tire of the exquisite beauty and unfathomable instruction contained in the 13th, in itself sufficient to tumble into ruins all those fabrics of human construction, on the front of which are inscribed the names of their architects, Calvin and his followers. In the fourteenth he returns to the consideration of the spiritual gifts; and it is from this chapter that those most absurd and mischievous pretensions to the gift of tongues derive their support. Then follows that inimitable chapter on the resurrection. He was led to the subject by having heard that some among them said “that there was no resurrection of the dead;” and among all the compositions that have ever been recorded, human or inspired, this will ever stand pre-eminent for force, grandeur and sublimity. The epistle closes with some information as to his own future movements, directions to his correspondents, and the usual salutations.

I thought that it might be of use to give this summary of the contents before commencing the extracts. I should further mention that it was written about the spring of A. D. 56, and that he had founded the church in A. D. 52.

1 Cor. i. 2. Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.

The same remark may be applied to this and other verses of similar import, as to the beginning of Romans. The expressions "sanctified in Christ Jesus"—"called to be saints, &c." do not imply any assurance of salvation, or even that the apostle approved of their conduct; but they are simply to contradistinguish them from the unconverted, unsanctified, uncalled Jews and Heathens. Among these "sanctified" and "called" there were divisions and factions,—there were many that are reprobated as carnal,—there were persons that committed great abuses at the Lord's Supper.

—20. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

The remaining verses, to the end of the chapter, with the whole of the second chapter, are an enlargement and illustration of the idea contained in this. Paul is not disparaging human faculties or the right application of them; but is showing how inadequate the pretended wisdom—the philosophy of the Greeks.—was to supplying man's greatest want; and that what appeared to such wisdom, to be arrant foolishness and weakness, turned out to be superior wisdom and irresistible power. But he nowhere discourages the use of our powers in searching into and applying this wisdom of God to our own circumstances and conditions. This seems to me to furnish a key to the right application of these passages.

—iii. 2. "I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able."

The sanctified, called, and saints, were then able to bear at one time what they had not been at another, and therefore were not made fit and perfect at once by supernatural illumination. The same conclusion may be drawn from the metaphor contained in the expressions "God's husbandry and God's building" applied in this chapter to Christians: for these are not instantaneous works or operations, but the effects of care, diligence and time.

—v. 10. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

Not only is the gradual progress of the work here presumed, but also the efficacy of attention, or "taking heed," in making the work good or bad. In the 12th v.

the difference of quality in the superstructure is represented by the terms gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, which are said to be built upon the foundation; and in the 13th v. this is represented as the work of man. In v. 18, it is said, that "if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise;" and this is construed into a declaration of the utter uselessness of human learning and ability, in coming at the knowledge of God's will. But we must observe that it is not true wisdom but wisdom *in this world*, which is put in contrast with true wisdom, that is blamed. The opposite of this is to become a fool (namely) in this world,—or, in other words, a man must renounce the confidence, self-sufficiency and arrogance of philosophy, such as the heathens cultivated, before he could become a true disciple of Jesus Christ. This is not a question at issue between different sects, but a point on which all are agreed.

— vi, 9. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God: and such were some of you.

These vicious and immoral persons were excluded from the kingdom; yet some of the Corinthians had been guilty of these vices. How had they been received into the church? Because they had repented and believed, and were instantly pardoned for the past, but they were required to be no longer addicted to their former practices. Their faith and repentance were not to save them *in* their sins, but *from* their sins, and thus to render them fit for another world.

— 20. For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

They were purchased and ransomed from sin and death by Jesus Christ, at the expence of much suffering, self-humiliation, privation and agony, that they might be received again by God as his children. Therefore, it should have been their great object to spread the glory of God, by the purity of their lives, and the holiness of their conversation.

Having met in an eminent Swiss divine, (Ostervald, on the causes of the present corruption of Christians—the third edition of the translation of which was printed in

1711,) with a very sensible passage, illustrating the language of the epistles on some of the controverted points—I will extract it, and subjoin it to this paper.

“ But now if it be asked, why St. Paul then opposes faith to works, and why he excludes works when he treats of justification; I answer, that the apostle aims at two things by this. His design is to show that works are not the cause and fountain of men’s salvation, but that it flows from the pure mercy of God through Jesus Christ. This he proves with respect both to the Heathens and the Jews, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans. But he did not mean to say, that good works were not necessary under the covenant of grace. His expressions are too clear to leave the least room for any doubt about this matter. To reject the meritoriousness of good works is one thing, and to deny their necessity is another. But 2, Because it may be objected that St. Paul does entirely exclude works, and that he uses expressions which imply that Christians are no longer obliged to the practice of them, and that they have no influence on men’s salvation either as causes or conditions, but on the contrary are opposed to faith: therefore, I add, that he speaks thus with relation to the works of the ceremonial law, and especially to circumcision. There were many in St. Paul’s time who asserted that Christians were bound to observe those legal ordinances. It was about this question that the Apostles met at Jerusalem, and determined (Acts xv) “ that Christians are justified by faith only, and that the yoke of the Mosaical ordinances might not be laid upon them.” The same controversy is handled by St. Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, when giving an account of his dispute with St. Peter, and of his reproofing him for his too great compliance with the Jews, he affirms that we are justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the Law.

“ Why has not that difference been observed, which St. Paul makes about works? When he speaks of the works of the Mosaical law, he calls them the works of the law, or barely works; but when he treats of the works which the Gospel prescribes, he calls them *good works*, because they are really good, holy and profitable in their own nature; but this title of good works is never bestowed upon the works of the ceremonial law, which, considered in themselves, have nothing of good-

ness or holiness in them. In a word, good works, in St. Paul's style, are quite another thing than barely works, or the works of the law.

“ If this had been considered, such great pains needed not to have been taken to make St. Paul agree with St. James. St. Paul says (Rom. iii. 28. Gal. ii. 16) that man is justified by faith without the works of the law ; St. Jas. (ii. 24) that man is justified by works, not by faith only. There is no contradiction between these two apostles ; both follow one hypothesis, and argue upon the same principles. St. Paul disputing against the Jews, who would tie Christians to the observance of the works of the Mosaical law, affirms, that faith in Christ is sufficient, provided it brings forth good works ; and that it is not necessary to observe the Mosaical rites. St. James (disputing against heretics who pretended that faith did save without good works, and so did entirely ruin our Saviour's morals) declares that faith which does not produce good works is not sufficient to salvation. Is not this the same doctrine with St. Paul's ? But instead of reconciling these two apostles, some people find here great difficulties. They do not reconcile St. James with St. Paul, but they refute St. James by St. Paul. St. James is expounded with great cautions, as if he went too far in saying that man is justified by works and not by faith only. This proposition is softened as much as possible ; it is excused rather than explained ; but as for what St. Paul says, that faith alone justifies without works, it is taken in the utmost strictness ; so that all is ascribed to faith, and nothing at all to good works.”

EREUNETES.

REVIEW.

The Pleasures of Benevolence ; a Poem : by WILLM. HAMILTON DRUMMOND, D. D.—Hunter, London ; Wakeman ; and Hodges and Smith, Dublin. 12mo. pp. 163.

The “ Pleasures of Imagination,”—of “ Hope,”—of “ Memory,”—have been recorded by their bards in song. The Muse, however, has not exhausted her catalogue of delights : and through Dr. DRUMMOND, a favoured priest at her shrine, she now presents us with the “ Pleasures of Benevolence.” The subject of the lay is inferior in interest to none of those which have already inspired

the votaries of poetry whose works we have enumerated ; nor is the execution unworthy of the theme. The reader of this exquisite composition will be struck and charmed with numerous beauties. He will meet with frequent passages breathing the very soul of poetry, instinct with true tenderness of feeling, and redolent of a sublime, a pure, and enlightened Christian piety. Well does it become Dr. DRUMMOND, who has already consecrated his muse to sacred subjects, and illumined his page with fire from the altar, to raise his voice in celebrating the glories of that benevolence, which prompted the mission of him, who on the mount of Galilee taught a benighted world, "*Who are the happy !*" Well does it become Dr. DRUMMOND, whose heart warms with the glow of sympathy for all mankind,—and not to mankind alone confines its cares, but takes a lively interest in the welfare of the inferior creation,—to come forth to celebrate that delight which the practice of benevolence imparts, and which his own soul has felt so often and so deeply. We are aware that a few expressions, perhaps too keenly pointed, in Dr. DRUMMOND's controversial writings, have been laid hold of by those whose inconsistent reasoning he has exposed ; and have been by them attributed to a sarcastic or virulent disposition. Never was mistake more gross. The man who would know what Dr. DRUMMOND really is, has only to look into his poetry ; in that lucid mirror, he will perceive the image of his mind. Nor is there any of Dr. DRUMMOND's poems from which a more correct idea of the author's character may be gathered, than from the "*Pleasures of Benevolence.*"

The Poem opens with the following animated lines ; which we transcribe no less for our own gratification than that of our readers.

" WHAT power beneficent arrays the world
In life and beauty, still diffusing good,
And kindling rapture in the heart of man ?
BENEVOLENCE—'tis she. In vision bright,
She bursts upon me, as a seraph borne
On wings of downy gold, and down to earth,
Celestial visitant, she comes, she comes !
Hence ! all ye ministers of wrath and wo,
All things unholy, all that grief or pain
Would e'er engender—hence, whate'er your name,
Down to your dens of darkness, whether born
Of earth or hell, and give the seraph way !

Forth from the bosom of th' Almighty Sire,
 His own, his chosen one, his best-beloved,
 With bliss-imparting look, and smile benign,
 Sweet as the smile of God, she comes, she comes !
 Around her crowd what spirits numberless,
 In forms embodied to the poet's eye,
 Her ministers—yes, all the spirits fleet
 That rule the elements—that lodge unseen
 In bowers of fire, or lucid domes of ice,
 In winds and rains, and viewless realms of air ;
 In earth's deep mines, and ocean's pearly caves—
 All that alliance claim with human hearts,
 That touch with sympathy, that melt with love,
 Or thrill with joy—All these, in various guise,
 Her mandate wait—and as she comes, the heavens
 With warmer radiance glow ; the ocean smooths
 His furrowed brow ; more balmy breathe the winds ;
 More deeply crimsoned blush the buds and flowers ;
 Carols the grove, and all harmonious things,
 Blent in grand chorus, hail her beautiful,—
 Worthy to reign. Lo ! Passion's snaky brood
 Have fled her presence ; Pride has dropt her crest,
 Revenge his steel, and Avarice feels her light
 Warm in his frozen heart. E'en things most wild,
 Tigers and pards, grown tame, confess her sway,
 With whining tone and gentle blandishment.

Daughter of Heaven ! O let me sing of thee,
 Friend, Guide, Preserver ! Thou, whose bosom beats
 In sympathetic mood to every grief
 Or extasy that moves the heart of man :
 O let me sing of thee, for I have felt
 Thy smile upon me, when my heart was chilled
 By a cold world ; and I have seen thy looks,
 To me more lovely than the placid morn
 To the tired seaman, who thro' midnight storms
 Has toil'd with peril ;—I have heard thy voice
 Trill on my ear more sweet than sweetest tone
 Of minstrelsy, or sound of kindred tongue
 To him whom shipwreck many a year has left
 To pine forlorn on some far desert isle.
 Daughter of heaven ! O let me sing of thee ;
 And, as thy Priest's and Poet's, may my song
 Declare thy vast munificence, thy laws,
 Joys and rewards ! Thrice happy if that song
 One generous feeling in the soul excite,
 One selfish thought expel, one act of good
 To human being prompt ! Then not in vain
 Shall I invoke thee, nor my song go forth
 A shallow, babbling stream ; but deep and clear,
 Sweet to the taste and healthful to the soul.
 Blest are the lays,—the loveliest muse of heaven
 Inspires them, that to virtue, wisdom, truth,
 And philanthropic action urge the mind ;
 From heaven, if not from man, their high reward."

After this animated introduction, the poet proceeds to point out various indications of the universal dominion of Benevolence which creation presents. He adverts to the bounty of nature in adorning her productions, for the gratification of sentient beings, with that beautiful variety of colours, forms and motions which they exhibit; and in causing each of the senses and intellectual powers to be an inlet of new delights. Among the latter, the pleasures of Imagination are thus described.

“—————All hail! ye train
Of sweet Imagination, wheresoe'er
Ye love to wander, whether by the lapse
Of Siloa's brook, or through the muses' bowers
In verdant Tempe, or by snow-crowned Alps,
Or where by Ganges' sacred fountain towers
Huge Himalaya, of earth's giant sons
The most gigantic, who the Orient grasps
In his broad arms, and nearest to the star
Waves his terrific crest, 'mid roaring winds
And thundering cataracts, and glaciers hoar,
And red volcanos' fires. With you, how oft,
Benign enchanters, has my spirit roved
Far from the sombre shades of spleen and care,
Thro' scenes of bliss and beauty! even now,
While by the lonely midnight lamp I woo
The muse's smile, I traverse fields of light,
Or float with plummy seraphs on the wind,
Or wander by the copse and bubbling rill
Whose music lulls me, or transported hang
O'er wild projections of my native rock,
When foam the eddyng surges, and evoke
From all their caves the genii of the storm!” p. 25. 6.

After surveying the various sources of enjoyment which the benevolence of the Creator has opened up to man, the different subjects introduced are rapidly enumerated in the following recapitulation which closes the First Book of the Poem.

“Now wide o'er nature, has the muse her glance
Turned rapid, and discovered nought but scenes
Of blooming, rich, unfathomable joy.
The higher still she soars, the deeper dives,
The wider ranges, more and more of good
Bursts on th' expanding view. With such pure love
As mothers feel for their dear progeny,
Benevolence reigns o'er all. But who shall tell
From what unnumbered springs her bounties flow?
The garden and the wild, earth, ocean, air,
Darkness and light, and height and depth confess
Her joy-respiring presence—On each sense
She scatters rapture—for the eye illumines

What scenes of glory ! for the ear awakes
 What sounds of ravishment ! The touch, taste, smell,
 Are all her handmaids ;—her's the kindly play
 Of each benign affection, all the joys
 Of intellect, of memory, judgment, taste,
 And winged imagination—Yes—for man
 She opes a thousand, and ten thousand springs
 Of never-ebbing bliss.—Her reign extends
 Thro' suns and systems numerous as the sands,
 Uniting all by ties infrangible,
 In such harmonious movements as create
 True music in the spheres. Great God to her
 Gave the high charge, to hold the mighty chain
 Of causes and effects. Thro' every link
 Of its immeasurable circuit, shoot
 Her quickening energies. But should her hand
 Its hold forego, 'twere Chaos all again."

In our next number we shall pursue our analysis of this beautiful poem ; and shall gladly avail ourselves of the opportunity of adorning our pages with farther extracts. We regret that want of space prevents us from continuing our remarks in this number ; but as it would be impossible to give any thing like a satisfactory review of the work at present, we prefer a postponement of our remaining observations to an abrupt dismissal of a work presenting no common claims to the public attention.

Intelligence.

ORDINATION OF THE REV. W. H. DOHERTY, IN THE NEWLY ERECTED REMONSTRANT CONGREGATION OF BALLYHEMLIN.

ON Thursday, the 6th of November last, the Rev. WILLIAM H. DOHERTY, formerly a student for the ministry under the charge of the General Synod of Ulster, but who, some time since, withdrew from that body, and attached himself to the Remonstrant Synod, from regard to the rights, and in obedience to the dictates of conscience, was publicly ordained to the pastorate of the newly erected Congregation of Ballyhemlin, by the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor. It is worthy of remark that both pastor and people, though then unacquainted with each other, and unaware of each other's intentions, had simultaneously abandoned their early ecclesiastical connexions, in consequence of their religious inquiries, and the progress of religious knowledge. The congregation is numerous, respectable, and intelligent ; and its spontaneous formation, in the *very focus of Orthodoxy*, affords a most favourable omen of future success, and encouragement to the friends of truth in other quarters.

After the conclusion of the public services, the Congregation entertained their minister, the members of Presbytery, and other Clergymen of various denominations, at dinner, in Kircubbin; ALEXANDER ALLEN, Esq, of Ballyobigan, in the Chair. In the course of the evening, the meeting was addressed by several gentlemen, in speeches replete with instruction and interest; and animated by the holy spirit of that gospel which proclaims "*Peace on earth, and goodwill towards men!*" We regret that our limited space only enables us to lay before our readers an outline of the observations of Mr. DOHERTY, in reply to the toast,

"The Rev. William Hugh Doherty, our young minister: and may he long remain among us."

Mr. DOHERTY rose and said,—“Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I have always thought, and I am now confident in my opinion, that an open and honest avowal of his real sentiments, is not only the duty but the interest of every man. When about two years since, after a patient inquiry into the doctrines of Christianity, I was led to dissent from the mode of faith termed Orthodox, there were many who counselled me not to publish my change of sentiment; and this advice was not without the appearance of what the world calls wisdom. I neglected, however, the well meant advice, and I rejoice that I did so. Had there been any disagreeable consequences, I hope I should have borne them patiently; but to me there have been none such. On the contrary, the very happiest period of my life has been that which followed my dissent from the General Synod of Ulster. I have lost no friends whose friendship was worth preserving, and I have gained many whose support and esteem might ennoble the humblest, whose affection has cheered my spirit, and will, I hope, continue with me till death shall break asunder all mortal ties. He has not lost much, who has only left behind him a place where religious and political fanaticism is predominant, and where reason and liberality must hide themselves, or suffer insult. He has not lost much, who has joined a people who are hostile to the unholy violence of sectarian animosity; who are friends of peace, union, and mutual love among their countrymen; and of Civil and Religious Liberty all over the world. I cannot say, gentlemen, how much gratified I am to see around me so many respectable men, of all religious opinions, met to grace our ordination dinner. For though I have expressed before you this day, in another place, my own peculiar opinions, with that open honesty which is the Christian's duty, and the free man's privilege, I can meet, and rejoice in meeting upon friendly terms, with liberal and enlightened men of all Churches; and nothing shall prevent me from viewing, with respect and esteem, any man whose conduct may deserve it, no matter by what sectarian appellation that individual may be called. It is my sincere desire, that our conduct as Minister and people, may tend to suppress—at least in this part of the country, that spirit of hatred towards our brethren of an opposite faith, which some men calling themselves Christian Ministers, are not ashamed to encourage. I hope we shall be able, by God's help, to do something towards inducing all men to live together in peace. I hope we shall be able to allay that bitterness and violence of party spirit, which has so long degraded Ireland from her rank among the nations, and which still continues to divide, and oppress, and enfeeble our unhappy countrymen.”

MONUMENT TO RAMMOHUN ROY.

IN the month of April last a public meeting took place at the Town Hall in Calcutta, to consider the most suitable method of commemorating the public and private virtues of RAMMOHUN ROY: Sir JOHN P. GRANT, (Chief Justice) in the chair. The meeting was addressed by several gentlemen, European and Native. RUS-SICK LAL MULICK, in seconding the first resolution, (which had been moved by Mr. PATTLE,) said, "Rammohun Roy was a man of an extraordinary character—his like we shall not see again. He arose amidst all the horrors of superstition to proclaim that he was capable of doing much more than his countrymen at that time thought." Russick Lal Mulick then expressed regret that he had not known Rammohun Roy personally, and eulogized his efforts for the abolition of the Suttee, in which work of humanity he stood almost alone. He dwelt also upon his generous promotion of the education of the natives by founding a school for Hindoo boys and employing teachers. The speaker praised the motive of Rammohun Roy's visit to England, and though he could not help condemning some provisions of the new Charter, asserted that to the Rajah India is indebted for its best clauses.—A subscription amounting to 6000 rupees was then collected, for the purpose of erecting a monument to the great reformer: to which Lord W. BENTINCK, the Governor General, has since added 500 rupees.

 OBITUARY.

Died, on Wednesday, January 14, at Inver, near Larne, JOHN BARKLIE, Esq. in the 64th year of his age.

The amiability of his temper, and the kindness of his dispositions are well known, and do not require the aid of an obituary in order to keep them in the recollection of his friends.

SAMUEL BRUCE, SEN. ESQ.

Died, on Sunday, January 18, at his seat at Elmfield, County of Dublin, in the 75d year of his age, SAMUEL BRUCE, Esq. late of Dame-Street, Stockbroker and Notary public.

This highly-respected gentleman acquired and retained the esteem and regard of all classes of his fellow-citizens by the uprightness and integrity of his conduct during a long and active life. Endowed by nature with a cool, reflecting, and intelligent mind, which he successfully devoted to the consideration of financial affairs, he possessed such sagacity and foresight on these subjects, that the most experienced persons appealed to his opinion with deference, and held it in the very highest estimation. He was constantly entrusted in his professional business with the transaction of affairs of great magnitude, and with the management of property both public and private to vast amounts; and he proved himself at all times worthy both of public and of private confidence, justly deserving the character of "*a faithful steward*."—Inheriting from a long line of honoured ancestors a name connected with moral worth and unstained by reproach, his conduct through life was worthy of his race. In political principles he was a steady and consistent friend of civil and religious liberty. In religious sentiment he was a Bible Chris-

tian, and consequently a decided Unitarian. The efficacy of Unitarian views as a guide in the practice of life was exemplified in the unswerving uprightness of his conduct through a very extensive course of professional occupation; and their influence as a fountain of comfort at the close of this earthly scene, was manifested by his pious resignation in much bodily suffering, and by his serene composure at the prospect of dissolution. His remains were interred, on Thursday the 22d January, in the family burial ground, in the church yard of St. Mary's parish. The funeral service was performed by the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, co-pastor of the Presbyterian congregation of Strand-street, of which Mr. Bruce was a member, and in which his father and brother had been ministers.

MISS VARIAN: MRS. W. DOWDEN: W. CRAWFORD, ESQ.
MRS. MAZIERE: MRS. NEILSON: RICHD. LANE, ESQ.

Extract from a sermon preached to the Presbyterian congregation of Cork, after a period of severe affliction and trial to many of its members. The text, "In my Father's house there are many mansions."

"The events that occur in small societies, are soon known to all their members. They are not only known, but there is a sympathetic influence, which pervading the whole of the limited circle, elevates or depresses the atmosphere of mind within its sphere.

"Small is the boundary of that circle to which I now address myself, and in the population of our extensive city, our society appears like a mote on the balance. But few as may be our members, the moral power of that few is widely influential, and every thing connected with the well-being of our members, is considered as matter of general interest to our fellow-citizens.

"The calamitous events which have of late befallen us, must have awakened deep regret in the hearts of our friends; and we have every reason to think, called forth very general sympathy for our sufferings. It is not long since we lamented the departure of a "virgin daughter of our Israel."* Even since that time, a quadruple series of losses has been sustained by our society, each portion of which has caused deep regret in the hearts of the survivors.

"The first onset of death, that king of terrors against our little citadel, commenced at this time with the removal of a mother,† a youthful partner of a youthful husband, taken in the prime and vigour of life from orphan children and endearing friends. And although in the discharge of the relative duties of daughter, wife, and mother, few might be found to equal, and none to surpass; yet did she not in the eyes of God seem too good for a residence in the "mansions of her father," and she hath been called thither to her rest, at the period when we had anticipated for her a long life of usefulness in this world. But we hope she is there enjoying a portion of that bliss which the Redeemer promised to his faithful followers; while to us is left the melancholy reflection that we shall behold her no more as an inhabitant of this world.

"The second privation we endured, was the loss of *one* who had long been the personification of moral worth in our city.‡ The father of a large and respectable family—the friend of the poor—

* Miss Varian. † Mrs. William Dowden. ‡ William Crawford, Esq.

the benefactor of the distressed—the encourager of the industrious, and the consistent philanthropist; whose name was the safeguard against the attacks of intolerance and bigotry; whose purse was ever open to the needy, and whose heart was kind and charitable to all. Placed at the head of the commercial affairs of a great city, his sterling integrity won “golden opinions” from his fellow citizens, while his unobtrusive piety secured to him the deep veneration of his fellow-worshippers, in this little corner of our Zion. His seat is now vacant of that respected form, which for nearly half a century occupied its pannels on each hallowed sabbath of rest; but his memory still lives to stimulate his descendants to lives and actions of a similar tendency, and speaks to all the sacred admonition, “Go and do thou likewise.”

“The third loss which our society has suffered within a little month was that of a sister who had long been an unwilling absentee from our social acts of devotion.* Year after year had brought her only the melancholy news of her children buried in one grave. Firmly she heard the appalling news, and when seated on the earth, herself in person the afflicted victim of the visitation of God, during many a long and weary day, throughout many a long and sleepless night, she endured the chastening of her Almighty Father, breathing ever the language of resignation to the Divine will;—“Father, not my will, but thine be done.”

“The fourth was a stranger.† She had not in person entered those walls, having but a few days before her illness visited this city; but her heart had preceded her appearance, and she had arisen on the morning of the last but one sabbath to join us here in uniting together our voices in the praises of Jehovah. Alas! she was not permitted to accomplish her pious intention. She was forced at the moment of her preparation to retire to that bed of suffering from which she arose no more an inhabitant of this world. But her last departing hour was not without its consolations; her expiring words were full of her hope in the mercy of God, as revealed in Christ Jesus, and assurance of meeting her departed relatives in those regions of purity and peace, where the Redeemed of the Lord shall dwell—where the stranger shall find a welcome and a happy home—where all her labours and journeyings of mortal life having had an end, we trust that she is ranked among the spirits of the just made perfect, and in their society approaching for ever the throne of the Living God.”

P. S. As soon as the preacher had descended from the pulpit, the intelligence reached him of the death of a sixth member of the congregation, Richard Lane, esq. the highly respected Mayor of the City, who was called away in the vigor of manhood and in the very commencement of the discharge of the duties of his high office. From the sterling integrity of Mr. Lane’s character in this his native city, his fellow-citizens of every religious and political sect and party had expected great advantages to arise to their public institutions from his administration of the affairs connected with the office of chief magistrate. Deep and sincere have been their regrets at his departure, while his friends will long mourn his loss as that of a beloved and respected brother.

* Mrs Maziere, of Petersfield. † Mrs. Jane Neilson, widow of Dr. Neilson.

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LOVE TO GOD, AND LOVE TO MAN.

THE three Christian Graces are Faith, Hope, and Charity. Faith respects the doctrines of religion; Charity its precepts, and Hope its promises. Charity and Love are expressed by the same word in the original language of the New Testament; and love comprehends the whole of practical religion. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

This comprehensive virtue is divided into love to God, and love to man; and these are the two pillars on which practical religion rests. The one includes every sentiment and duty that we owe to God; and the other, all our obligations to promote the spiritual and temporal interests of our neighbour, and of mankind in general.

When we consider the vast interval between their objects, God and man, we must suppose these affections to be widely different; and yet they must agree in some common quality, since they are called by the same name. They agree as far as they imply affection; but the nature of this affection must vary according to its object; and each of these objects may be considered in such different points of view as to call for different degrees and modifications of love. If we contemplate God, as the Supreme Being merely, invested with all the incomprehensible attributes belonging to the First Cause of all, Infinity, Eternity, Omnipotence, and Self-existence, we can hardly say, that the Deity is an object of love. We cannot love what is incomprehensible. The object of affection must be commensurate both with our understandings and our feelings, at least in the aspect in which we contemplate it. If we know no more of God than this, he would rather be an object of terror, astonishment and awe, than of love.—Our emotions are very different, when we reflect on God, as our Creator and Protector; as the Being who supplies our wants,—contributes bountifully to all our enjoyments, and as our Father in heaven. In like manner our love for man must vary widely in degree, when we consider

him merely as a human creature, and when we look upon him in the capacity of a friend, a brother, or a father.

The love of God has been carried to an extravagant excess by enthusiasts and mystics; and writers of piety more rational than theirs, and feelings more lively than ours, often express themselves on this subject in such a manner as to make us envy their sensations. Among the generality of Christians, however, this fundamental and inestimable part of the religious character is at a low ebb. This is occasioned, partly, by the indulgence of vicious affections, or, at best, of worldly attachments. Therefore it is written, "Love not the world; neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is very natural, that criminal propensities should withdraw our thoughts and our affections from God, for they are incompatible with them; and an inordinate attachment, even to pursuits that are innocent, if not carried to excess, will equally divert us from the love of God; for we "cannot serve God and Mammon." While, therefore, one half of the world is immersed in pleasure, and the other involved in business, either of gain or ambition, we cannot wonder, that "the love of many is waxed cold," especially as all these pursuits so naturally lead men into vices and crimes. Retirement, meditation and innocent occupations are essential to the growth of a devotional frame of mind; yet, though they are essential, they are not always sufficient; for this decay of divine love is often occasioned by too cold and philosophical a contemplation of the divine nature. A philosophical turn of mind, however, though inconsistent with a fanatical, enthusiastic affection, is not incompatible with the love of God, as required in the gospel. A philosopher, or one who has imbibed philosophical ideas of the Divinity, may feel not only veneration and esteem, but a degree of sentimental attachment, that may engage him to dwell on his nature and his works; the conduct of his providence, and his revealed will with pleasure, gratitude and affection. He may learn to obey him from a pure principle of love, a sincere desire of pleasing, a disinterested anxiety to rise in his estimation. He may even bring himself to sacrifice life itself with all its most alluring enjoyments, its most beloved connexions, and its most flattering prospects, merely because he conceives that this is agreeable to God, or contributes to the forwarding

of some object or cause, that seems conformable to the divine will. He may learn to do all this with pleasure, and to be glad of an opportunity of testifying his affection. He may acquire so profound and effectual a sense of the moral perfections of the Deity, and the amiable nature of his divine character, if we may use such expressions, as to act in this manner without any aid from motives of interest or even of gratitude,—without any expectations from the providence of God, as exercised in *his* behalf, or that of his friends, but purely from a love for his perfections. This, I say, may be conceived possible. It is, however, the highest degree of divine love, and will by many be thought, and by more be found, to be unattainable ; but, surely, it cannot be deemed extravagant, when personal dependence and personal obligations are added to the account. A man who duly estimates the gift of existence, reason and understanding, of humane affections and a capacity for religion, with all the attendant blessings annexed to our rational nature, will rather esteem the want of such affections an unnatural defect. Still more must our own deficiency in these respects confound and humble us, when we take into account the process of redemption ;—the care with which the Almighty has watched over the moral and religious interests of his creatures from the beginning of the world ; and the signal display of the divine grace and mercy in the salvation of mankind by the Lord Jesus Christ. The habitual contemplation of such subjects would have a natural tendency to kindle divine love ; to suppress every wish that did not accord with the divine will ; to place one's happiness in pleasing God, and to worship him with a degree of warmth and delight, to which we are, in general, strangers.

As our love to God is founded, not only on gratitude for favours conferred, but also on esteem for his gracious and benevolent nature in general ; so with respect to mankind, we have many reasons to love them, arising from sympathy, relationship, and friendly intercourse ; and with regard to individuals, they are often possessed of amiable qualities, which independently of any personal connexions, may claim our esteem and love. This last source of affection, however, can hardly produce any fervent love to mankind in general. Their character is of too mixed and dubious a nature to warrant the same degree or even kind of affection, which we feel for a

worthy and amiable individual; but there are so many points of contact,—so many sympathies, enjoyments and sufferings common to all; we are so combined by our common nature, and by our relation to God and his creation, that there is still sufficient ground for mutual affection. This will, no doubt, be inferior to what we feel for a kinsman or a friend; but still it may be denominated love. It will incline us to consider every man, at first sight, as a being entitled to our sympathy and good offices; as one whom we should consider as a friend, till we shall find cause to change our opinion. Even after we have discovered some imperfections, we should avoid conceiving a dislike for him as long as we can; and though we may have reason, from experience, to distrust and shun him, we should, in every case, be on our guard against beholding him with hatred, malignity or any hostile emotion. As far as reason will allow us, we should sympathize with him, apologise for his deficiencies and frailties; and “believe and hope all things favourable of him,” since we ourselves also are in “the body.” As love to man is more in our power than love to God, so it is made a first step to it. “If a man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.” Love to God is also used as an inducement to love our neighbour. “He that loveth God should love his neighbour also.” The love of God to us is also a persuasive to love one another. “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

The relation of man to man, considered in the most general view, is a sufficient foundation for love to the whole species; and, accordingly, our affection should extend to them all. This, however, must be faint, when compared with that excited by more intimate connexions; and even in these our love must vary, not only in proportion to our relationship, but also to their merit. It is impossible, that we should love an enemy with the ardour of friendship; or a stranger with that degree of affection which we reserve for the members of our own family; neither is it agreeable to reason that we should take a base and villainous person to our bosoms, as we would one of a meritorious and amiable character. With regard to merit, however, we should be always on our guard against a propensity “to judge our brother, or to set at nought our brother.” We should also be cauti-

ous of suffering our esteem, or our affectionate feelings to be repressed by suspicion, jealousy, or ill-founded rumours; and should study to resist as much as possible the unavoidable effect of his frailties, vices and crimes. If we cannot continue to behold him with any affection, that deserves the name of love, we should at least view him with pity.

If we had it in our power to do good to all, it might be our duty to enter into no discrimination of character. We should then "do good to all," according as we had opportunity and ability, without any farther limitation. As this, however, is not the case, it is added, "especially to those who are of the household of faith." The reason of the case requires the same specification, as to any other connexion which has a peculiar claim on our regard. "God is kind to all, even to the evil and unthankful;" at least as far as the course of Providence is concerned; because he has it in his power to be so: but as we are limited in our power, we must be select in our objects. The propensity should be to diffuse happiness as widely as possible: but when there is a competition and we are obliged to make a choice, it would be contrary to human reason to prefer vice to virtue; or to withhold a portion from a good man, and give it to a bad one, who had no more need of it than he. We may be allowed, on the contrary, to bestow favours in greater abundance on those who are not only more deserving of them, but who will apply them to better purposes, than others. Thus far, I should suppose, we may judge our brethren and presume to reward merit, and discourage vice; though, when no such competition exists, we should not decline to relieve the distresses even of the evil and unthankful. Thus shall we keep as near the Divine character as we can. The reason why we cannot imitate it in all respects is, that the Almighty is unlimited in his riches; and let him give ever so much to the wicked, he has still enough for the good; whereas, what we bestow upon one is subtracted from another.

I do not wish, however, to encourage a taste for speculation concerning the means of promoting the most general happiness. This is unwarrantable in the wisest among us; and is presumptuous and dangerous in the bulk of mankind. While, indeed, we confine ourselves to a more liberal extension of bounty to deserving objects, and enlarge our liberality in proportion to the

good effect it is likely to produce, without stinting the claims of others, we cannot deserve censure; but we are guilty of great presumption, when we withhold our assistance from our fellow-creatures, merely because they are undeserving, though we can befriend them without injury to ourselves or others; and this, on the supposition, that we are extending the sum of human happiness by declining to relieve the necessities of the individual. We may promote the general happiness by doing good to individuals; and may serve them on this principle, because we are sure, that in the meantime, we are doing some good, obeying the precept to love our brethren, and doing ill to none; but to suppress our benevolent affections in particular cases, with a view to promoting the cause of virtue and happiness, is a presumptuous usurpation of the divine attribute. "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord." Even justice should be assimilated to loving kindness and tender mercy: and whatever the office of a magistrate may require, *our* views should be confined to brotherly love; or if we extend them, in some cases, somewhat beyond the individual, we should still be on our guard against inflicting personal misery, as the means of promoting general happiness. This mode of acting presupposes a knowledge both of private character, and of the divine government; which are equally removed from our sphere of duty and of knowledge. If we relieve a vicious person in distress, we are sure of doing some good, though we may not contribute to the general happiness of society: but if we decline ministering to his necessities, we are sure of occasioning some misery to the individual, with very little, if any, prospect of serving the community.

It is sufficiently obvious, that we owe many duties to God and Man; to God, both abstractedly considered, and as related to us; both as Almighty, Infinitely Wise, and Supremely Good, and as our Creator, Preserver and Benefactor; to man, both as our fellow-creature, and as our countryman, fellow-citizen, friend and kinsman. It may not, however, be equally clear, why we are required to love the Lord with all our heart and soul, and our neighbour as ourselves. Would it not be enough, if we did our duty without regard to motives or feelings; or if we performed it from a pure, unimpassioned motive, without insisting on those affections and emotions,

which it is so difficult for us to command, and of which some are perhaps incapable? May we not rest in that saying of the beloved disciple; "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments?"

Perhaps some of less susceptible feelings may be under a necessity of resting in this, and yet may find acceptance; but this must be considered as an inferior state to that of love to God and man; and the reason why these affections are required from all who are capable of them, and an assiduous cultivation of them imposed upon all, without exception, as a duty, is abundantly plain.

What we do with affection, we do with pleasure; and what we take pleasure in, we shall do well and constantly. A duty affectionately performed, contributes to our own enjoyment, and to the happiness of the object of our benevolence. We seldom fail in our duty to those whom we love. We rather exceed in our good offices to them. If we fail in promoting their real interests, it is from too great a desire to please and gratify. On the other hand, if we are unimpassioned and indifferent, we cannot feel pleasure; and if we feel no pleasure, but act from cold conviction and reluctant principle, our duty will be often neglected, or performed in a languid, ineffectual manner; so as to be of little use or gratification to others, and to have no beneficial effect on our own minds. Besides, if brotherly love be not encouraged, self-love, and that perversion of it, called selfishness, will usurp the direction of our conduct; and if we act purely from a regard to our own interest, ease or pleasure, others will be equally indifferent to us. The reverse of this will take place, if we cultivate social affections; for it is the dictate of our nature, to love those who love us. This is an instinct that can hardly be resisted by the vilest of mankind. "If ye love those only who love you, what thank have you; do not even the publicans the same?" Ingratitude has, therefore, been always reckoned an unnatural vice.

The truth of these observations appears in the languid manner in which their relative duties are performed by most men. If we love God with all our heart and soul, we shall worship him with greater ardour; serve him with greater constancy, and promote his will with greater zeal. If we love our neighbour as ourselves, self-love and brotherly love will combine. We shall not

only do to him, as we wish him to do to us ; but as we would do to ourselves. For want of this affection, our charity, which is the boasted virtue of the age, degenerates into a formal, ostentatious display of wealth. In what a frigid and even insolent manner do men frequently exercise this virtue, if virtue it may then be called ! How differently is it practised by the few who take pleasure in it, and are actuated by humane and tender affections ; with what tenderness, delicacy and sympathy ! what zeal, self-denial and perseverance, even as a mother tendeth her sick child ! Affection and sympathy are the means, which providence employs to secure the performance of all important duties, and particularly the endearing charities of domestic life, whether parental, filial or fraternal. Our Lord, therefore, consults our happiness as well as our duty in these injunctions. If we be inspired with love to God, and love to man, all our actions will be pleasing to ourselves, as well as gratifying to our neighbours, and acceptable to God. The principle of love will enlighten and invigorate our minds in the knowledge and performance of every duty, sacred, civil and domestic. Domestic affection will preserve us from being blinded by any selfish propensity or malignant passion ; a pure and single mind will guide us in a straight way ; a benevolent heart will make it a path of pleasantness and peace, and it will terminate in a mansion prepared for us by our gracious Redeemer.

NEMO.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 12.)

CHAPTER V.

V. I. And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain [or hill] ; and when he was set [seated], his disciples came unto him.

He chose a hill as best fitted for being heard and seen ; and he sat down according to the usage of the Jewish Doctors, Luke iv. 20. " He closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister and sat down, and he began to say unto them," &c.

V. 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, [humble and lowly] for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. [Such were most likely to become his disciples, and fitted for the kingdom of heaven].

V. 4. Blessed are they that mourn [for their sins, or bear afflictions with resignation].

V. 5. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth [or land].

The Greek word, like the corresponding word *earth* in English, is ambiguous in this and many other passages.

V. 13. Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? [Who shall teach the teacher?] It is good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

Maundrell mentions insipid salt. "He broke off from a small precipice in the valley of salt, a piece exposed to the sun, rain, and air: which, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, yet had perfectly lost its savour." This salt might in some places be so plentiful, as not only to be thrown out on the paths and highways, but used for repairing them.

V. 14. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

Upon you the eyes of men will be fixed; and your conduct can no more be hid from the inspection of men, than a city erected on the summit of a hill.

V. 15. Neither do men light a candle [a lamp], and put it under a bushel [a measure], but on a candlestick [a stand], and it giveth light to all that are in the house.

The Jews did not use candles.

V. 17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Do not think I am come to abrogate the law of Moses, and the prophets: I am only come to supply their deficiencies, and to give mankind a more complete system of religion.

V. 18. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot [Heb. jod], or one tittle [dot] shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

These are the smallest characters in Hebrew. That is, shall never pass away. Our Lord uses popular language to express an impossibility.

V. 19. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven, [or in the church of Christ.]

This relates to the moral part of the Law of Moses, not to the ceremonial or Levitical, as appears from the following examples, v. 21, 22.

V. 20. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed [or excel] the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven [either the church of Christ or the kingdom of glory].

V. 21. Ye have heard that it was said by [Gr. to] them of old time : Thou shalt not kill ; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.

V. 22. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment : and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, [vain fellow, 2 Sam. vi. 20] shall be in danger of the council ; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

The *judgment* and *council* were *courts* of judicature among the Jews. The *judgment* took cognizance of common petty cases, and could inflict but slight punishments. The *council* was a more august and venerable court, and inflicted greater. By images taken from these Jewish courts are the different degrees of future punishments represented. That of the *judgment* denotes the lowest degree : that of the Sanhedrim, or *council*, a higher : the *valley of Hinnom* the highest. Here they burned bones, the dead carcasses of animals, the refuse and offal of the numerous victims ; and, from the fires which were kept constantly burning there, it was frequently used as the emblem or symbol of hell.

Instead of such unbecoming language you should practise gentleness and forgiveness of injuries.

V. 23, 24. If, therefore, thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee ; leave there thy gift [or offering] before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

V. 25. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him ; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

As prudent men prefer a composition with an adversary to going before a judge, so it is better, if you have offended any one or have a quarrel with any one, to settle your dispute with him in time, while you may in the present life, than to defer it to the day of judgment.

V. 29. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee ; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy

whole body should be cast into hell. [Gr. Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, v. 22.]

If any thing as dear to thee as a right eye or right hand, be the cause of sin, you must part with it. The eye to be plucked out, is the eye of concupiscence, and the hand to be cut off, is the hand of violence and vengeance; that is, these passions are to be checked and subdued, let the conflict cost us what it may.

V. 32. Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

Such a man commits adultery, if he marries again while his wife is living; and he causes her to commit adultery, if she marries again during his life; in which latter case, her second husband is an adulterer.

V. 34. Swear not at all.

This prohibition relates to the sinful and profane use of common oaths in conversation, see v. 37. "Let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;" and was not meant to apply to oaths administered on solemn occasions for the purposes of justice. Compare Deut. vi. 13; x. 20. Our Lord answered on his oath, when adjured by Pilate, and Paul uses the form and substance of an oath when he says, "God is my witness;" and "I call God for a record upon my soul." The following instances were vulgar and profane imprecations, and therefore forbidden.

V. 38. Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

Retaliation was agreeable to the law of Moses: Exod. xxi, 24; but our Lord does not mean to censure Moses or the Law, but refers to the practice of the Scribes who had perverted it, in favour of private revenge. The Law did not grant this privilege to individuals, but to the magistrates, to restrain violence and injustice.

V. 39. But I say unto you that ye resist not evil, &c.

These precepts relate to small matters, and are hyperbolical and proverbial expressions. It is probable that those precepts in this discourse which have so strong an appearance of *hard sayings*, were confined to our Lord's early disciples in their peculiar circumstances. The spirit of them, however, is still binding; and requires that patience and forbearance under injuries and affronts, which is best calculated to preserve the peace of our own minds, as well as of the world at large. Our Lord did not "turn the other cheek," when smitten by the soldier; and Paul claimed his privilege as a Roman, when the Centurion would have ordered him to be scourged; and he afterwards appealed from the Roman governor to Cæsar.

V. 41. And whosoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain.

The Greek word is derived from the Persian *Angari*. These were public couriers, who in executing the orders of government had the power to press horses and men to go with them and assist them in accomplishing the object of their mission. In imitation of this policy, the Roman couriers assumed authority to press men into their service.

CHAPTER VI.

V. 1. Take heed that ye do not your alms before men [with a view] to be seen of [by] them.

V. 2. Do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you they have their reward,—[namely the praise of men at which they aimed; but no more.]

Make no ostentatious display of your charity.

V. 9. Hallowed be thy name.

Sanctified be THOU: for the *name of God* is equivalent to *God himself*, see Psalm, xx. i.

V. 10. Thy kingdom come.

May the gospel prevail and rule over the world.

V. 11. Give us this day our daily bread. [necessary sustenance for this day.]

V. 12. And forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Forgive our omissions and violations of the duties we owe to thee, in like manner as (or for) we forgive our debtors. see Luke, xi. 4. For we also forgive," &c. *Debts* and *sins*, *debtors* and *sinners* are equivalent terms. See Luke, xi. 4; xiii. 4.

V. 13. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Knowing our own frailty, we pray that the course of thy providence may not involve us in trials or temptations; but rather do thou deliver us from them when they occur.

V. 13. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

This prayer we offer unto THEE; for thine is universal DOMINION; and POWER to grant our petitions, and the welfare of thy creatures is thy GLORY.

V. 22, 23. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is THAT darkness!

As a lamp is the light of a house, [v. 15.] so is the eye the light or lamp of the body. If the eye be sound and clear, you walk in

light ; but if it be disordered or extinguished, you mistake the way, or walk in darkness. Thus if the light that is in thee be darkened, how much more grievous is that darkness, the darkness of the understanding and the soul, ignorance and sin !

V. 24. No man can serve [with equal affection] two masters [of different dispositions.] Ye cannot serve God and mammon [money.]

V. 25. Take no thought [Gr. be not over-anxious] for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment ?

Our blessed Lord here teaches us that God, who gives the greater blessing, will generally also bestow the less.

Be not solicitous or unhappy about meat and drink, in order to prolong your life, nor about dress and clothing to adorn your person and protect yourself from cold. Is not life a greater gift than meat, and the body than clothing ?

V. 27. Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature ?

You grow from infancy to manhood, without care or thought on your part, and you cannot add an inch to your stature, or take one from it : all is done for you. In this as in every thing else you must depend upon providence. " If ye then be not able to do that which is least, why take ye thought for the rest ?" Luke, xii. 26. A cubit here may be taken indefinitely for any measure.

V. 32. For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.

V. 33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Ye are to " seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," the righteousness required by him, with the same earnestness of endeavour as earthly-minded men use about the things of this world ; and depend upon providence for your worldly success.

Heathen and *Gentile* are respectively derived from a Greek and Latin word of the same import, and signify *unbelievers*. As the Greeks and Romans considered all other nations as Barbarians, so the Jews called them all Heathens or Gentiles.

V. 34. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

It is not wise to aggravate the evils of to-day by anticipating those of to-morrow ; and those of to-morrow, by anticipating those of the following day ; for thus we shall double the evils of every day.

CHAPTER VII.

V. 1. Judge not, that ye be not judged.

This precept has nothing to do with the technical administration of justice for the punishment and prevention of crimes ; but applies to the ordinary intercourses of life.

Be not prone to censure others, lest you provoke God to judge you with the like severity.

V. 3. And why beholdest thou the mote [Gr. splinter] that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Splinter corresponds better than mote with beam, and the whole was a proverbial expression: "Take the beam out of thine own eye." Light and great faults were meant.

V. 6. Give not that which is holy [things to be eaten only by the priests] unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

There is caution to be used as to instruction and admonition; which are uselessly and imprudently bestowed on the hardened and incorrigible.

This text may be improved by transposition, thus: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, lest they turn and rend you; and cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet."

Dogs and swine were unclean animals and represent base characters.

V. 7, 8. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

Among men, if you wish to obtain a favour, you ask for it; if you would find any thing you have lost, you seek for it; if you wish to get into a house, you knock at the door; and, in general, you obtain what you ask for, you find what you seek for, and the door is opened when you knock at it. Such too is the nature and condition of prayer to God. If ye would receive a favour, ye must ask; if ye would find the truth, ye must seek; and ye must knock at the door of mercy, if ye would get in.

V. 12. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

Make the condition of your fellow-creatures your own, and behave to others in the same manner, as you would think reasonable, if you were in their circumstances, and they in yours. This includes the whole system of duty in the Law and the Prophets. A judge is not to acquit a criminal, because he himself in a similar situation would wish for pardon, since he could not think it reasonable or right to do so.

V. 14. Because [but] strait is the gate, &c.

There are two ways and two gates leading through life. Choose ye the strait gate and the narrow way of piety and self-denial, which lead to life eternal; for the broad way and the wide gate of vice and folly lead to destruction.

V. 15. Beware of false prophets [guides, plausible and selfish men].

(To be Continued.)

LETTER TO AN ORTHODOX STUDENT.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You have freely opened to me, in your last letter, the painfully unsettled state of your mind with respect to religion; and have called upon me earnestly, “even as I value our time-tried friendship,” to give you my advice. With such a request I feel bound to comply; the invocation shall therefore be responded to, with my whole heart.

Not only, my dear friend, has our attachment been tried, as you say, by time; but it has passed an ordeal still more difficult to be borne. There was a period, not a distant one, in which we were both zealous for the success of those opinions denominated Calvinistic. After a patient inquiry into the meaning of the Scriptures, I became convinced that the theological system of Calvin was an invention of man, unsupported by Revelation, and hostile to the first principles of Christianity. I, of course, avowed my change of sentiment, and united myself to one of those religious bodies, in which alone difference of religious opinion is tolerated, and a subscription to Calvinistic creeds is not enforced. To you, questions of Theology were at that time new, and the discussion of them uninteresting, or disagreeable; your mind fully occupied by the pursuits of science and literature, retained its former religious sentiments. Yet notwithstanding this difference of opinion on religious subjects, (a difference which has often broken the bonds of affection, and loosed the cords of love,) we preserved our youthful friendship. We knew one another's hearts too well, not to perceive that each was a sincere believer in the opinions which he avowed. To me the frankness and honesty of your disposition were known; and by you the shameful falsehoods and low scurrility which the bigots of your party published against me, were received with unmingled disgust.

I have recalled these things to your memory, that you may the more willingly receive that honest, friendly, and sincere advice, for which you have so earnestly entreated.

I admit that your case is apparently a difficult one. You say you are a Trinitarian; but not a Calvinist: that you believe in the truth of one part of the “Westminster Confession of Faith,” and in the falsehood of other parts of it; that you hold by the doctrine of the Deity

of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit ; but reject utterly as at variance with reason, justice, and common sense, as opposed to the whole scope, and purpose of divine revelation, the doctrines of unconditional election and reprobation, original sin, the condemnation of infants, and the power of the civil magistrate over the church. The question then is, can you continue in connexion with the Synod of Ulster? I answer, that as an honest man and a Christian, you cannot. Is it possible, my friend, that you can hesitate a moment in such a case? If there be *any part* of the “Westminster Confession of Faith” in the truth of which you do not believe, you are imperatively called upon, by the voice of honour, by the voice of conscience, and by revelation, which is the voice of Deity, to avow your sentiments before the world, to withhold your signature from a creed, part of which, you believe to be untrue, and to separate yourself from that body which would force you to stain your honour, and offend your God. Ask yourself, my dear friend, I beseech you, ask yourself with deep solemnity, as in the immediate presence of God, the following questions, —Is it possible that the doctrines of Calvinism can be true? Is God a respecter of persons? Is the future destiny of every man irrevocably fixed before he enters upon life; and hath the Creator of the universe fore-ordained that the great majority of those human beings whom he hath called out of nothing into existence, whom he hath gifted with a love of knowledge and a capacity for happiness, should perish utterly, without remedy, and without hope? Is this life after all no state of probation or of trial? Are all the offers of mercy to perishing sinners no more than a solemn mockery?—But it is needless to pursue the subject further. On this point your opinions are as decidedly opposed to Calvinism as my own are. Let me repeat, then, in the most earnest and solemn manner, that you cannot continue in connexion with the “Synod of Ulster,” without the most dishonourable and mean hypocrisy. The reason is clear. In the Westminster Confession of Faith, the doctrine of fatalism is plainly and broadly stated. To the truth of this, you will presently be called upon to give public and solemn assent. What choice have you? You do not believe the doctrine, and your heart is changed indeed if you can play the hypocrite. I know there are methods of *explaining away* the harsh features

of Calvinism which some men of more prudence than honour adopt; but with these you have no concern. It is the "Confession of Faith" as it is written, in the plain and obvious meaning of the words, that you are required to believe. The Westminster Divines were at least honest and sincere Calvinists; they have stated the doctrine of predestination so clearly, that no man of common sense can mistake their meaning, and no man of common honesty will say, that that meaning is not perfectly plain.

The following extract from the "Westminster Confession of Faith" leaves no room either for sophism or subterfuge, and the man who assents to the truth of the creed in which it is contained, without believing the doctrine which it so positively and so explicitly asserts, must have strange notions of truth and honour:

"By the decrees of God for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

"These men and angels thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

"Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love; without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other cause in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

"The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sins, to the praise of his glorious justice." (*Conf. of Faith, chap. ii.*)

To this strange, this peculiarly antichristian doctrine, you cannot assent; yet these are the very words of that creed which the Synod of Ulster will force you to receive, and avow, if you continue under their care. I need not refer to the other parts of the "Westminster Confession of Faith," to which you object as strongly; the case already stated is so plain that he who runs may read, and the conclusion which I have mentioned above, can neither be evaded nor opposed. It is, that if you continue with the Synod of Ulster,—if in the presence of God and man you assent to doctrines which you believe to be

untrue, you will degrade yourself in your own opinions and in the opinion of all honourable men, of all parties; you will wound, irremediably, your conscience, and you will sin wilfully and deliberately against God.

When, therefore, at the commencement of this letter I granted that your case was a difficult one, I had no intention of acknowledging that your duty was either doubtful or obscure. I will not believe that you can hesitate, because I know that to a generous mind, hypocrisy is the most detestable of all crimes.

The difficulty of your case does not, therefore, affect the answer to your first question,—“Should I leave the Synod of Ulster?”—but your second,—“If I separate myself from that body, shall I relinquish altogether my design of entering upon the office of the Christian Ministry; or, would you advise me to join some other religious denomination?” This is a much more difficult question. I have considered it calmly, and will give you my honest opinion.

Did I believe that your dispositions and habits were similar to those of many students whom I have known, I would at once advise you, to turn your thoughts to some other pursuit, and leave the unpleasant paths of controversial theology. If I could believe that your desires were fixed upon the usual objects of youthful ambition, wealth, power, or fame, I could warn you, that if you enter the Presbyterian church as a minister, it is absolutely impossible to obtain any of these. A frugal competence, and respect within the narrow limits of his parish, is all that a Presbyterian minister can hope to enjoy; and I am persuaded that no disappointment can be more bitter and grievous than that which awaits the aspirant to the office of the Christian ministry, whose mind is filled and agitated by worldly ambition. Did I believe, therefore, that you had set your heart upon the acquisition of riches, or power, or fame, I would urge you to engage in business, or adopt some other profession; and I doubt not but that union of patience and enthusiasm which has always marked your character, would lead to ultimate success. To me, however, the disposition of your mind is so well known, that I am persuaded none of these pursuits have charms for you. Your studious and retired habits; your love of knowledge, and especially of religious knowledge, and your zeal for the spread of Christian truth, and the progress

of human improvement, seem to have peculiarly fitted you for that office, which I know you have always desired to obtain—the office of the Christian ministry. My advice, therefore, is—what you perhaps anticipate—that you continue to persevere, with all your former diligence, in your present course of study; that you read the scriptures much, and books of controversy little; that you reconsider, with deep attention, your present religious sentiments; and if, after such scrutiny you find yourself confirmed in the opinion, that the “Westminster Confession of Faith” is, in many particulars, directly opposed to the most important doctrines of Christianity, that you make no secret of the discovery, but proclaim to the world your sentiments; and leave, immediately, that religious party, which would endeavour to usurp a tyrannical authority in the republic of conscience, and, with insolent impiety, lord it over God’s heritage.

Such is my advice; but I am well aware, my friend, that if you follow it, you will require firmness and courage. You will require to prepare yourself for the slander and the calumny of your enemies—for the coldness and desertion and perhaps (for religious animosity hath no limit) the hatred and treachery of friends. You must prepare yourself for knowing, practically, the truth of Christ’s ever-appropriate declaration to his disciples, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.”

This, it is true, is the dark side of the picture; for to recompense your difficulties, your sufferings, your trials, you will have the sweet remembrance of having done your duty honestly; you will have the noble consciousness of having braved the world rather than stain your honour; of having hazarded, with a glorious rashness, the loss of friends, of fortune, of popularity, for the cause of truth; and above all, you will have the unspeakable consolation, in which the pious only can participate, the peace of mind that passeth understanding, and which is given as a reward to the Christian who hath nobly chosen to serve God rather than man.

But if you pursue this line of conduct, I do not hesitate to predict, that even in a temporal point of view, you will lose little, and gain much. When the Synod of Ulster, by the narrow-minded exclusiveness of its present spirit, shall have forced you to leave its communion; you may find another church to which, (excuse the partiality of a grateful heart) it is *my* honour

and my happiness to belong—a church which Providence seems to have raised up amidst the intolerance and bigotry of the age, to the end, that the liberal and philanthropic spirit of Christianity might not be entirely overwhelmed by sectarian violence and party zeal—a church that is set apart as a city of refuge for all who reject human authority in matters of faith, and prefer the word of divine revelation to the false and impious parodies of it, which men call creeds. Here, thank God, there is an honourable retreat provided for all, whose free and manly minds, imbued with the independent spirit of Presbyterianism, cannot submit to the dictation of secret conclaves, and private committees; the leaders of which usurp a tyrannical authority over conscience, insult and browbeat all who are mean enough to submit to them; adopt the cant of Methodism, without its sincerity; despise human learning, as the fox despised the grapes in the fable; and by their insolent attempts to substitute their “bald disjointed chat” for the lectures of a learned professor, expose themselves to the scorn, derision and ridicule of their own students.

In the Remonstrant body you will be free from the domination of such masters; and though you should continue to differ, as at present you do differ from many of the ministers of that body in your religious sentiments, yet this cannot in the slightest degree affect the cordiality of your reception among us; for the very first, the fundamental principle of our union as a religious community is, that the portals of our church shall be open to Trinitarians as well as to Unitarians; to all who can believe in Christ Jesus our Lord, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, the redeemer of his people; to all who can subscribe the only Christian Creed,—the scriptures of truth.

I have now, my dear friend, given you my advice in the spirit of sincere affection; I have many things to add by way of encouragement and persuasion; for I will not conceal how anxious I am that the familiar friend of my youth should aid that holy cause to which I have devoted myself, and assist by his influence and his zeal, the progress of pure and liberal Christianity.

But enough at present. Perhaps, if the many avocations of a country clergyman permit me, I shall write to you again upon the same subject.

Your sincere friend,

WM. HUGH DOHERTY.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER. I

NO. IX.

(Continued from p. 40.)

1 Cor. viii. 11. And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died ?

This passage seems to me very strong against the Calvinistic doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. It presumes the possibility of perishing in some of those for whom Christ died ; and is therefore destructive of that all-sufficiency that Calvinists ascribe to the death of Christ. It implies also, that we can cause one another to perish ; and therefore, that a weak mortal can overturn that perseverance which is established by a decree of the Almighty. This text of scripture and our carnal reason coincide, both admitting the precariousness of man's mental state in every period of his sojourn here ; both, likewise, recognizing an instrumentality in one another's improvement, and consequently that the Christian's state is not a work of supernatural power or influence.

— ix. 25. And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown ; but we, an incorruptible.

Temperance is here said to be one of the means of striving for that mastery by which we are to obtain an incorruptible crown. Therefore that crown is not a thing already obtained so as to be never lost again ; nor is that mastery a sudden thing, but gradually acquired by striving for it.

— 26, 27. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as one that beateth the air : but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

One would think that the simple fact of the great apostle of the Gentiles, admitting the possibility of himself being a cast-away, might have checked the arrogant presumption of the high Calvinistic school. Perhaps it may be said, that the phrase, "I so run, *not as uncertainly,*" countenances the doctrine of Perseverance : but this would be a "far-fetched" argument indeed ; for it is only said, that if he run he will certainly attain the object of his race, not that he will succeed whether he run or not ; and Paul speaks thus

by way of contrasting the Christian race with the running at the games of which he had been speaking, in which though they all ran with their utmost speed, only one could succeed. In the Christian race, on the contrary, every one that runs will *certainly* obtain the prize for which he runs. But strong and conclusive as this passage is, it yields to the following :

— x. 12. Wherefore, let him that standeth take heed lest he fall

What more direct and pointed expressions could be used ? It follows a series of texts in which the apostle is applying the instances of backsliding among the Jews in former times, to the edification and warning of Christians, that they might be on their guard against similar delinquencies.

The thirteenth chapter breathes the purest spirit of practical religion, characterizing that charity that is above faith and hope, by its long-suffering and kindness, its freedom from envy, boasting, and pride : the absence of all unseemly behaviour, its moderation, mildness of temper, and inclination to think favourably of all : its repugnance to vice, its pleasure in truth : its tendency to bear, or more literally, to cover all things unfavourable to the character of others—to believe all things good—to hope all things for the best, and to wait patiently rather than form a hasty opinion to another's prejudice. The eleventh verse, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child ; but, when I became a man, I put away childish things," is another instance in which Paul reasons from the analogy subsisting between natural and revealed religion, so as to show that they are not at that variance with each other, which it is necessary to establish in order to render Calvinism consistent with itself.

— xvi. 13. Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men ; be strong.

What use is there in a man watching if he be in no way accessory to the state of his own mind ? Indeed it appears to me, that this word and every other implying any voluntary exertion, any labouring for the attainment of an object, should be expunged out of the religious vocabulary of a thorough-paced Calvinist, as I am sure they would never have appeared in the New Testament, if it had been the design of the writer to inculcate Calvinism.

II. CORINTHIANS.

This letter was written not many months after the other, and in the interval Paul had passed from Ephesus to Macedonia. In this latter place, Titus had informed him of the effect produced by his former letter upon the Corinthians; and it was for the purpose of expressing his feelings on this occasion, and of following up the good advice given, and impression made, that he wrote this second epistle.

— iv. 4. In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

The obstacle to the prevalence of the light of the Gospel, is not a decree that certain persons should never be able to believe, but must inevitably be damned; but it was an exorbitant attachment to worldly things, and sensual pleasures. This is obviously the meaning of the figurative expression; “the God of this world hath blinded their minds.”

— v. 10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

This is one of several declarations of the principle on which rewards and punishments will be administered in another state of being, from which it is manifest, that the *result* looked for, and intended to be produced by the influence of the Gospel, is the amendment of our lives, the rectification of our principles, the purification of our corrupt desires, and the renewal of our spiritual strength; and that all the *credenda* or things to be believed, are but means of making the desired impression on the heart for the furtherance of the other object. Accordingly it is stated in the subsequent part of this chapter, that Jesus Christ was the means of our reconciliation with God, so that the sins of all men before believing, should not be imputed to them, or set to their account, but that when they became Christ's, they might be as new creatures, and begin the world anew.

— vi. 1. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Why beseech them if it were an immutable decree of God, that they should never fail, as the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints implies, or rather asserts?

— viii. 12. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

This is a principle immediately applied to pecuniary liberality; but the equity of it holds as strongly in all other cases.

EREUNETES.

[FOR THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

Who died for Men?

To this question all Christians will reply, the Lord Jesus Christ; but this answer is plainly ambiguous; for, according to the popular view of Scripture, the word Christ involves two separate beings. Thus the Westminster divines allege, that “two whole perfect and distinct natures, the godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person [or Christ] without conversion, composition or confusion.”* If now we say with some, that the manhood of the Saviour alone was crucified, or put to death, we expose ourselves to the charge of heresy; because it is maintained that nothing less than an infinite sacrifice, that is the sacrifice of the very and eternal God, could make atonement for the sins of the world, committed as they are against an infinite Being; and the manhood of Christ, however mysteriously connected with the Godhead, could not form an infinite sacrifice. Assuming then the doctrine of the many to be true, the answer to our question, “*Who died for men?*” must be, GOD! Yes, such must be the inference, if popular premises be right; and such, without doubt, is the prevalent opinion. However the calm reflection of educated Trinitarians may shrink from the idea, as we know many of them do, it is the general if not the universal belief of the unthinking multitude. Nor is this strange doctrine confined to the multitude. Hear the mind of one of the most distinguished ministers and most popular preachers in the Irish church, by law established. The passage is lengthened, but the subject is important. “They crucified him.—Whom? Who is it that hangs on that central cross? Who is it that was thus crowned with thorns and clothed with mockery; thus scourged and scoffed, thus buffeted and spit upon; rejected when a murderer was cho-

* Confes. of Faith, viii, 2.

sen, and crucified between two thieves, to mark that he was considered the vilest criminal of the three? Oh! how shall I give utterance to that mystery of mysteries! I am lost in wonder! I am overwhelmed with awe! How shall I speak it? how shall I tell, that that rejected, reviled, scorned, scoffed, scourged, crucified one was God manifest in the flesh, the mighty God, the Lord God Almighty, the supreme maker and monarch of heaven and earth, "Lord of Lords and King of Kings, God over all blessed for ever!" Oh, is it strange that the sun was afraid to look upon that sight; that the heavens were shrouded with darkness when their Almighty Maker was expiring; or that the earth shook with convulsive terror, as if it trembled to support the cross on which its adorable Creator hung?"*

We might wonder that a doctrine so awfully strange could gain currency in the world, did we not know something of the history of the human mind. But when we remember the strange things that have been taught and received among men; when we think of the idolatrous rites warring with reason and morality, that are cherished by millions; the gross and vile impositions of Mahomet that have been handed down as God's truth from sire to son; when we consider that a majority of Christians receive the consecrated elements of the Eucharist as the very body and blood of God, and Episcopalian Protestants believe that their bishops can impart the Holy Ghost by the laying on of their hands, and the clergy can give absolution of sin to the sick and the dying by the word of their mouth,—need we, can we wonder, that the doctrine of Jehovah's death is received as a great and saving truth? We are almost driven to believe that there is no idea too strange to be entertained by men: and experience would warrant us in supposing, that the greater the absurdity an opinion may possess, and the deeper the air of mysticism it may wear, the readier admission it will find into the heart, and the firmer hold it will take on the feelings.

There is something truly mysterious in the Deity's death; and its mystery is the origin of all the fervour and fanaticism it awakens. Who has ever been present at the elevation of the host in a Roman Catholic Chapel, and has marked the pomp and ceremony that attend the

* Sermons by the Rev. Hugh White, p. 51.

rite, and has watched the priest bowing in worship before the consecrated element, and uttering the words of adoration before the embodied God, and has seen devotion beaming forth from the eyes of the admiring spectators, and heard the breathings of devotion poured from their lips; who has witnessed these things, and has not for a moment caught the spirit that reigned among the devotees? And who is there that has heard some minister of religion depicting in vivid colours the crucifixion of Jehovah, with all the creative power of the poet, and all the life-giving influence of the orator, picturing Calvary's scene; that has seen the mighty preacher move his wand, and before the mind's eye rise up in panoramic view the awful event—the cruelty of the murderers, the patience of their victim—the sufferings, the agony, the death of the Almighty—the darkening of the sun that veiled his face in terror—the convulsive throes of earth—the rending of rocks and the opening of the graves,—and has not been captivated by the image, and carried away by his admiration? We are told that after the missionaries had laboured in vain to instil the elevated sentiments, and heaven-born piety of the Gospel into the hearts of the ignorant Greenlanders, and had to no purpose exhibited to them the hopes of the soldier of Christ, they represented the Saviour as God nailed to the cross—his body quivering with agony, and the life-blood streaming from his veins; and the barbarous people, whom neither reason nor virtue nor piety could affect, were won to the Moravians' teaching by an appeal to the wild sympathies of their nature, and the gross ignorance of their minds. And why is it that similar views of Christianity are still hailed by the multitude as the vitalizing energy of divine truth, and the "power of God unto salvation?" Plainly because of the mystery by which they are veiled, and the amazement which they excite.

We have spoken of this view of Christ's death as mysterious—need we show that it is absurd? Need we speak of the all-present and everlasting Jehovah as incapable of dying? Surely not. If the omnipotent arm on which this and ten thousand other worlds are sustained, were paralyzed by death, the sun would not be darkened merely; it would sink into chaos, and desolation would spread throughout the infinity of space. But reason revolts from the conception. What does

Scripture say? When God would assure his people, because he could swear by no greater, he swears by *himself*—when Christ would convince his disciples, does he rest on himself? No; he appeals to his father—he speaks of himself and his father constituting *two* witnesses—in Gethsemane he prays to his Father—on the cross he likewise prays to him, and calls him *his God*. If he were himself God, to whom did he pray? and, if he were not God, it follows that God did not die on Calvary; and thus Scripture harmonizes with reason, both joining their testimony against the popular doctrine of God suffering in Christ for the sins of the world.

C.

ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF DEATH.

(*From the Boston Christian Examiner.*)

[THE following article is inserted in the Bible Christian, at the suggestion and request of a Christian family, to whom it has proved, under trying circumstances, consolatory and useful.]

CHRISTIANITY was designed to introduce into the world, new views and feelings concerning death. We seem to see its character and office typified in the visit of Jesus to the house of Mary and Martha, on occasion of the death of their brother. It was a house of affliction. Wailing and lamentation were heard in it, as they are, at one time or another, in all the dwellings of this world. But our blessed Saviour approached it in the calm consciousness that he was commissioned with a doctrine and clothed with a power that would triumph over death; that death, in fact, was not the end nor the interruption of existence; that death, indeed, was only death in appearance, while in reality the spirit's life is progressive, ever continued, immortal. What less do his words import, than the annunciation to the world of this new view of mortality? 'I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall *never* die'—shall die not, at all, for ever! The apostles, in like manner, evidently considered themselves as commissioned to teach new views of death. They taught the christian converts to 'sorrow not as others who had no hope.' They represented the coming of Christ as designed to 'deliver those, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.'

The severity of this bondage in the ancient world, is sufficiently apparent from its funereal customs, and the whole tenor of its writings, and from the very terms by which they represented death as the great calamity of human existence. That language which has conveyed to us the largest portion of ancient literature, contains more than thirty epithets, all indicative of the deepest dejection and dread, which were familiarly and constantly applied to this event. Death was denominated the terrible, the mournful, the inexorable, the insatiable. It was cold, cruel, bitter, merciless death. It was represented as deaf to the cries of mortals, unpitying to their miseries. It was the dire necessity, the dark day, the fatal calamity, the iron sleep, the eternal night. Imagination can scarcely conceive of anything more appalling than the scenes of lamentation to which this event gave rise among heathen nations; which came to be a matter of custom and form, indeed, but which could never have been a matter of custom and form, without having originated in the most horrible ideas of the reality. In the houses of the deceased, for days together, their relations set up the most dismal wailings and outcries of grief. They upbraided the very dead with ingratitude and cruelty for leaving them; so unreasonable and violent was their sorrow. Nor can we easily blame them, if we consider their actual and effective belief. Heaven was to them scarcely more than a dream of poetry. The future world was a world of shadows. In that dim and solemn land of vision, a train of unsubstantial phantoms passed before their eyes; but no living thought or feeling was there—the termination of life was the end of all reality. If it were so, indeed; if this conscious being were to cease at death; if every cherished thought and feeling, which we grasp with all the strength of our souls, were doomed to utter extinction; if the venerated and the loved were to be lost beyond recovery: if all this were true, human nature could not refuse to its sad fate the tribute of inconsolable sorrow. If all this were true, we might justly say,—Speak not to us of consolation—there is no consolation, there is no support for such a lot; nothing but dulness can bear it; nothing but indifference can tolerate it, and nothing but idiocy, we were ready to say, could be indifferent to it.

But ‘thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory’ over these awful and overwhelming anticipations. Chris-

tianity, we repeat, was designed to introduce into the world new views of death and futurity.

But in this as in several other respects, we apprehend, that it has made as yet but a feeble impression upon the mass of those who have received it. We have not yet partaken of the cheerfulness, tranquillity, and triumph of him, who 'has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light in the gospel.' We have not so 'lived and believed' in Jesus, as triumphantly to feel that we 'shall never die!' There is more, we are tempted to say, of heathen despondency and dread among us, than of christian hope and trust.

Indeed, the usual treatment of the subject of death, is one, as we apprehend, which is scarcely in accordance with the spirit of the christian religion. The place which the fear of death occupies in the religious emotions of multitudes, is one which Christianity by no means assigns to it. A consideration of this event, a dread of it, an activity awakened by this dread, a mournful countenance when it is mentioned, and tears shed at a funeral, with many, form too large a part of the whole sum and evidence of their piety. To think of death is too often considered as the very beginning of religion; to prepare for it, as the very business of religion, and to pass safely through that great ordeal, as the very end of it. Surely, the great object of our religion is *not* to make us ready for some temporary exigency, nor to meet one dreadful event or moment, but to prepare for the sublime happiness and glory of an immortal life. This glorious aim would justly inspire, cheer, and elevate the soul; but to fix its attention too much upon one point of time, however serious, interesting, and trying in our moral progress and account—thus to fix the attention upon one point of dreadful apprehension, must narrow, depress, and darken the whole noble work of religious endeavour, faith, and fidelity. What effect this tendency of religious sentiment has had, both upon the prevailing religion and irreligion of the times, is a very serious and interesting inquiry, but one which we cannot now pursue much into detail, beyond the hints that will naturally arise in the prosecution of the subject. We will only observe for the present, that mistaken and exaggerated ideas of the evil of death, tend evidently to prevent the calm and settled expectation of dying, and rational and just views of the preparation for it.

They are fitted to make the impression, that, to be prepared to die, we need some qualification analogous to so dreadful an event; that we need a state of mind altogether unusual, altogether beyond the simple tenor of a good life, altogether different from the calm and conscientious performance of our common duties. Thus, these ideas of death tend to resolve religion into a kind of unnatural excitement or overwhelming agitation. They also occasion the world infinite unhappiness; and, what is worse, an unhappiness closely associated with religion. That bondage through fear of death, from which Christianity was intended to relieve us, still lays its iron yoke upon the timid, the thoughtful, and the anxious; while to the careless multitude, who need to be impressed, an image is presented, which is, at once, the more terrific and the more useless, because they 'cannot discern the form thereof,' and can give it no steadfast attention.

We must also express our apprehension, that this subject has not always received a proper treatment from the pulpit. Death, it may be, has not been spoken of, in that calm and temperate, though solemn manner, that becomes the christian preacher. It may have been, sometimes, the argument of his impatience or his displeasure. It may have been made the occasion for eloquence or declamation, when it should have been of calm instruction or sober and wise admonition. He who regards death as the greatest of calamities, as the most terrible thing that can befall us, has not yet learned Christianity. Sin is worse; odious and besetting vice is worse; and, to a good man, there may be many things in life that are worse than death; especially inaction, unprofitableness, and to disgrace his sacred calling. He who is ever resorting to this subject as a last argument, and on all occasions presenting it to terrify men into their duty, is yet in the childhood of the christian life, if not among the weak and beggarly elements of a still earlier dispensation.

We must, also, venture to question much that often passes around the beds of the dying. The last scene should be as far as possible calm and quiet. The infirmity of human nature, the agonies of friendship in such an hour, we would speak of with indulgence; but it should be remembered, that it is our duty, as far as possible, by our resignation and fortitude, to sustain

the sufferer, that we should not add to the last solemn trial of the sinking spirit the disturbing influence of violent agitation or clamorous grief. He who walks with his friend down that valley of shadows, has need to do it with a sustained demeanour, with a calm aspect, with a firm step, with a sympathy full of all human gentleness, with a purity full of divine and immortal hope. Above all, religion should not come to the scene of a death-bed, to urge, as a matter of course, its questions or its formalities. Let it speak its holy words, or rest in its holy silence of faith and prayer; but the dying hour is no time for intricate casuistry. Friendship may indeed whisper its anxious inquiry; but formality should speak nothing. Abstruse questions of faith or of experience should not then be agitated; still less should there be such stress laid, as with surprising frequency is done, upon the question, whether the dying man is 'willing to die?' No inquiry could be more unsatisfactory as a test of character; and, indeed, it avails nothing but to spread among the living the false impression, that a preparation for another life, is a willingness, when it is unavoidable, to leave this. The reply of the pious and learned President Dwight to all such questions, contains a volume of instruction on this subject. 'My life,' he said to his inquiring friends, 'my life must answer for me.' Neither with technical questions, then, nor yet with any indispensable formalities does religion approach the dying hour. Is there no prayer but that which is formal, loud, and vociferous? Can those who stand around the dying bed, if they are ever capable of prayer, fail, in the silence of their grief, in the extremity of their impotence, to lift up their hearts to God? In that scene, where 'reality is dealing with us,' set forms should not, uncalled for, intrude themselves. To hear, as we have sometimes heard, loud and agonizing voices of prayer, that startled and shocked into temporary consciousness, the sinking and bewildered senses of an expiring mortal, has struck us with a horror, that overcame our awe even at death, and seemed to turn the solemnities of dissolution into sacrilegious disorder and confusion. So should we not have our own departure marked; but we would that stillness—where all pray in silence, where the affections of the spirit only move in the hushed atmosphere of death, where the soul breathes its unutterable thoughts—that

stillness should settle down upon that last scene that is to usher us into the world of spirits!

But it is time that we should enter more formally upon our design in bringing this subject before our readers, which is to consider some of those prevailing views of death, which are either erroneous, or which, being just, are nevertheless, through our want of Christian faith, suffered to occasion more distress and despondency than they ought. This discrimination of views that are wrong, or of views, which, though right, are suffered to exert a wrong influence upon our feelings, will mark the division of the subject, which will govern us in what we have now to offer.

We shall speak of this subject, not without solemnity, and the tenderness due to a theme so affecting—of these we can scarcely fail—but we shall not speak of it with an awe that forbids us to reason upon it. We shall speak of it as those, who, God helping, do not fear it, with any excessive and unreasonable dread. We believe that it is the great course of nature, the appointment of God, a wise and good appointment, and that it is to be met with pious submission, calmness, and trust. We believe in One, who has destroyed ‘the power of death;’ who has come to deliver us from this very fear that has struck so deep a horror into the world, who has unfolded to us the bright and exalting hope of an endless and blessed life.

(To be Continued.)

REVIEW.

1. *The First and Second Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Union of Presbytery and Prelacy.* By JOHN KNOX, Jun. pp. 21.

2. *The Church of England unmasked, &c.* By A PRESBYTERIAN. pp. 11.

THE present are eventful times. Every year, as it rolls on, carries with it some remnant of a darker age; and though silently, yet gradually and certainly, the evils that in by-gone times had grown up and flourished in the nations, are passing away into the ocean of oblivion. There was a time when the papal power swayed its iron sceptre over Europe, and paralyzed the energies, and crushed the liberties, and poisoned the religion of her children. There was a time when the prelatie pow-

er of misnamed Protestantism cast its darkening shadow over England, and issued those unholy decrees that forged the chains, and kindled the fires of persecution, and drove two thousand pious and devoted ministers of Christ from their families, their altars and their homes, to seek an asylum in the 'woods and wilds' of a foreign land. Such times *were*, but, thanks be to God and to Christianity, they *ARE* not. Another spirit has made its way into the minds of men—the chord of public feeling has gained another tone, and the world will not much longer bow down and crouch before their fellow-men, however gorgeous the robes in which they are attired, or however high the accidental distinction they possess. And well may we rejoice at the signs of the times, and delight to mark the shadows which coming events cast before them; for till the silent revolution that is working in society has been consummated, we can never hope that the Gospel of Christ will have free course and be glorified.—Till religion throws off the incubus by which she is weighed down, and her sons stand forth in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, we may hope in vain to see truth, happiness, liberty and peace prevail in the world. Under these impressions we hail with some pleasure, the able pamphlets, whose titles we have given above. They are but two from the many that are teeming from the press on the same subject. But coming from the quarter they do, (we mean the General Synod of Ulster) they will be regarded with greater interest. The writers seem to have been provoked to appear in print by the memorable speech made by the leader of their church some four months ago; and although (perhaps intimidated by the personal influence of that individual,) they have not given the sanction or the weight of their names to their opinions; they may and we trust they will be read, marked, and inwardly digested by all whom they may concern. Presbyterianism was once the pride and boast of many an Irishman. Our fathers' martyred blood by which it was watered—the sore sufferings in which it was planted—and the storms of persecuting power by which it was nursed and strengthened, should make it a dear and sacred plant to us. But alas! it has not flourished in later days—its healthy spirit has departed—it has drooped, almost died. The Synod of Ulster once cherished a spirit of free inquiry—her language to her

people was,—“Prove all things,” “Search the Scriptures;” and then she was an ornament to Ulster, and a blessing to its inhabitants; but now, when she has thrust her neck into a yoke of bondage, and bound herself by those creeds that had chained down the human mind for ages, and constituted the Westminster divines, (or their representatives in the form of a Committee) into the virtual *head* of the body, need we wonder that she should so forget her former dignity as to yield herself the submissive and obedient wife of lordly prelacy! We had written ICHABOD on the grave of her former name; but re-action seems to be at work and her glory may yet be recovered. Casting aside the trammels by which she is fettered, and shrinking from the contaminating influence of Church of Englandism, she may rise from the ashes of her ruin and yet bear up the ark of religious liberty and religious truth, when the corruptions that now prevail shall have been swept away by the tide of public opinion.

In one of these pamphlets we have the Romish and English churches set in juxtaposition and their “*family likeness*” traced out. Thus these two churches (between which somebody has said there is but a *paper wall*) agree “in robbing Christ of his glory as King and Head of the Church, and in the support of that spiritual supremacy ‘on which is written the name of blasphemy;’ they are similar in their liturgies, and in many of their rites and ceremonies; they are the same in their plan of ordination, in the orders of their priesthood, and in the observance of holy-days.”* And the Trumpeter thus speaks on another point—“Are not these crimes of high treason against liberty of conscience still committed, or unrepented of by the Church of England? True, we have no open persecution in these days. The martyrs have long since ascended out of great tribulation, and are entered into rest. But is there not the persecution of slander and intolerance? Do our clergy experience no rectorial scorn and insolence as they labour in their ministry, ill paid and ill-rewarded; yet having the testimony of a good conscience and the support of truth? Have the curates who are doomed to climb the steep ladder of parish or diocesan promotion, become less anxious and eager to proselyte our people

* See the Church of England unmasked.

and to fill their churches with recreant, because ignorant Presbyterians?" We admire the opposition which the one expresses to those who would rob Christ of the kingship of his Church, and the reprimand which the other gives to the supercilious haughtiness and occasional proselytism of the Established Clergy. Here, and wherever else they oppose the spirit of Antichrist or the spirit of despotism in religion, we heartily concur with them; and we trust that their voice will be heard. But it is right that we should take the beam out of our own eye, that thus we may see clearly to pull the mote out of our brother's eye. We should ourselves give to Christ the sole masterdom in his church, and we should subdue every feeling of intolerance in our own breasts, before we lay such charges at the door of our brethren. And is it not a fact, that while the king (or queen as the case may be) is *bona fide* the head of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and nothing can be ordained or ratified without his sanction,—so also in the General Synod of Ulster a temporal masterdom has been set up, and overtures established, which shut the gates of the church against all who will not bow down to the idol embodied in them? There may be despotic rule as well in a republic, as in a monarchy; and men may be as truly robbed of their rights and privileges by a band of aristocrats, as by a single tyrant. It is not to the prelate, but the spirit of prelacy we object; and we think that in the blast which the Trumpeter blows, we can catch a discordant note that tells of Presbyterian supremacy!

This disciple of John Knox, with the determined hatred of Episcopacy, which that old reformer evinced, seems also to possess that intolerant and overbearing spirit, which, however it may be extenuated by the ignorance and agitation of a former age, but ill comports with the free and enlightened æra in which we live. He speaks of the "golden dream" which the Westminster Divines indulged,—of the rulers adopting in substance a "*Presbyterian uniformity of religion throughout the realm.*" And is it to such a battle the Trumpet is calling us? Does it summon the inhabitants of Ulster to join in a struggle for the overthrow of one religious establishment that another may be raised upon its ruins? If so, let the sound pass unheeded as the "idle wind,"—or be heard like the voice of rebellion in the camp of

the Lord, to be drowned by one concentrated shout of condemnation. If we *must* have an establishment, let us still bear the burden that is upon us. Though our Bishops be clothed in purple, and fare sumptuously every day; though our spiritual pastors roll over our land in splendour, and fatten on the incomings of the people's toil,—better to endure this—far better to “bear these ills, than fly to others that we know not of.” Now we must give our *money* to the ruling hierarchy—then, perhaps, our *conscience*—now, the sword of the magistrate is unsheathed to exact the tribute of our *pockets*—then, perhaps, it would be found to bring the *mind* under its subjection. But we must not indulge in such suppositions; the spirit of the age—the signs of the times are against them; men will learn to know and to appreciate their gospel rights—to believe that they are spoken to as wise, and to judge what is said—to feel that their master is *one* and their obedience must be single—We even hope that *ascendancy* and *toleration* will soon be blotted from the vocabulary of Christianity—that the walls of partition which priestcraft and sin have raised up between “men and brethren” shall be destroyed—that the floodgates of knowledge shall be opened wide, and its streams shall sweep over the church, bearing off the corruptions that have gathered within it; but the ark of Religious Liberty, like the ark of the Patriarch, shall proudly float on the bosom of the troubled waters, bearing down to “generations yet unborn” the blessings that were given by a SAVIOUR, but withheld by a Saviour's foes.



II.—DR. DRUMMOND'S “PLEASURES OF BENEVOLENCE.”

(*Concluded from p. 44.*)

WE resume, with much pleasure, our analysis of this beautiful poem. Our last notice finished the survey of the First Book. The Second opens with a just tribute to the pleasure afforded by benevolent actions: not those alone which are performed to human beings; but also those of which the inferior creatures are the object. Upon this topic the author very properly refers to the institution of the day of rest, as an ordinance calculated, and doubtless intended to teach man a lesson of humanity to the lower animals.

“HAIL, holy day ! the Sabbath of the Lord,
By mercy infinite, of old, ordained
To teach, with other precious lore to man,
The gentle lesson of humanity
For Nature’s children all. That peaceful day,
The steed exulting on the champaign wide,
Toss’d his loose mane, from spur and rider free.
Th’ unburthened camel, o’er the wild, that day,
His task pursued not. In the furrowed glebe,
Rested the glittering share, and in the stall,
The steer unyoked, might ruminate at ease.
Nor male, nor female slave, sad servitude,
That day, deplored, but with the household mixed,
Sires, sons and daughters, at the holy shrine
Where all are equal, to the Lord supreme
Offered their vows devout. O happy day !
Blest remnant of the real age of gold,
When men indeed were brethren now, alas !
Is but thy memory left ? Shall leasure claim
The Sabbath as her own ?—this day bring forth
Her steeds, her chariots, and her proud array,
To celebrate her triumphs in the face
Of heaven ?—Insulting ! Shall the groaning horse
This day of violated charter plain ?
Sabbaths return, but not to him returns
Rest, or sweet respite from consuming toil.
In vain the outstretch’d neck, the languid eye,
And jaded limbs, deep-trench’d by many a scar,
A short cessation beg, one little day
Of strength-restoring rest. Another sun
May yet roll o’er, ere bursts his wearied heart :
And so from day to day he toils and toils,
’Till life’s last nerve is worn and rubb’d away.
Hard is his fate, and hard the gen’rous steed’s,
Whose strength or fleetness brings him to contend
With space and time, to swell the cruel pride,
Or glut the avarice of his ruthless lord.
Gored by the spur, and furrowed by the lash,
Lo ! how he strains till every sinew starts,
And every pore exudes a bloody dew ;
Besprent with foam, and panting to achieve
One triumph more, with spirit unsubdued,
He reels and falls, and at the goal expires.
Ah ! cruel recompence !—Ye Arabs wild,
Sons of the desert, come—your gentler lore
Teach Britain’s sons, and mend the Christians’ heart.”

The cruel sports which were once so prevalent, but which happily are so no longer, at least among persons of education and intelligence, are condemned with an indignant severity of rebuke ; and those needless experiments upon living subjects, which, under the pretence

of scientific investigation, are really nothing more than the means of gratifying a morbid curiosity, at a prodigal expense of animal life and suffering, are reprobated with just abhorrence. But still the noblest objects of benevolence are afforded by human beings who stand in need of the kind offices of their fellow-men. The distressed, the indigent, the friendless, the ignorant, the vicious members of our race demand our philanthropic exertions. In removing penury, mitigating pain, enlightening the uneducated, and reforming the depraved, our benevolent sympathies find their most appropriate exercise; and our nature itself its noblest dignity.—To one labourer in this extensive field, a just tribute is paid in the following lines :

“Honoured of women ! glory of thy race,
 Illustrious FRY ! thy name shall ever glow
 Bright in the records of Benevolence ;
 Thou, who, arrayed in panoply of truth
 And purity, didst unpolluted breathe
 Amidst pollution, in the last retreats
 Of wretchedness and crime ; thy joy to seek
 The dungeon—when in courts thou mightst have thrown
 What lustre round thee ! Well didst thou prefer
 More high distinction. In the prison lay
 Thy field of glory. There, where few e'er come
 To gather laurels, hast thou found a bough
 Of amaranth immortal ; there didst pour
 The holy dictates of reclaiming truth,
 With such a winning gentleness as stole
 To the stern culprit's heart, and to a school
 Of reformation changed the felon's den.
 O blessed change ! The walls that erst replied
 But to the clank of chains, to curses dire,
 And all the horrid dialects of sin ;
 Now echoed to the mild and heavenly strain
 Of bland instruction. The despairing found
 Hope in thy smile ; the destitute in thee
 First hailed a friend ; and, by thy sweetness won,
 Th' obdurate sinner learned to weep and pray.
 Matchless of women ! in this sinful age
 And most adulterous, dost thou shine as pure
 As a bright star, dark wintry clouds between.
 What praise, all human praise beyond, is thine !
 To heart like thine what recompence so sweet
 As its own high approval, whispered soft,
 E'en as the voice of God, “ Well done ! ” “ Well done ! ”

We cannot withhold from our readers the following beautiful passage.

“ But who in love to man e’er equalled him
Of Galilee?—With yon refulgent sun
What star can vie? As that swift orb in heaven,
So ceaseless he on earth, still ‘went about,’
Delighting to do good. His word was power,
Wisdom, and life. He spake, and pale disease
Blushed healthful rosy-red—up sprang the lame,
Perfect in nerve and limb—the withered arm
Grew plump and sinewy—in the eye’s quenched orb
Kindled a living light—the ear’s closed porch,
Re-opened, heard, as harmony from heaven,
Mellifluous sounds. For, from his lips divine
What virtue flowed!—what true philosophy,
That shamed the pride of Greece, to folly turned
Her boasted wisdom, and to man revealed,
What long he sought in vain, his true chief good!
All-potent Love divine, that as a flame
Glowed in his breast, pure, holy, and sublime,
Ne’er to be cooled, relaxed, or overcome,
Led him victorious from the conflict fierce
With Death and Hell.—The barriers of the tomb
He rent asunder, poured the spirit of life
O’er its dead dust, and opened heaven to man.
Angels, Archangels, Seraphim, who stand
Around th’ eternal throne, with harp and voice
Exalt the Well-beloved; his triumphs sing;
Darkness dispelled; Sin vanquished—Death dethroned;
Truth, radiant as the sun, brought down from heaven;
Your glorious liberty, ye sons of God,
Conferred on man, and Paradise regained!”

The Third Book opens with an address to Benevolence whose influence, the author, with that happy union of piety and philosophy which characterises the whole poem, traces to the kind and gracious appointment of the All-wise Creator of man. Dr. DRUMMOND then illustrates, in a very striking manner, the fact that this law of the Creator is best fulfilled by doing the good that is immediately in our power; and not by indulging in impracticable visions of universal utility. In this fact is involved the important and beautiful corollary, that there is no human being, how humble or how mean soever he may appear, who has it not in his power to perform the duties, and taste the pleasures of benevolence. But while every class has its appropriate duties, so that none can be excluded either from the obligation or the luxury of doing good, it is unquestionably incumbent on those whom Divine Providence has blessed with the means of extensive usefulness, to aim at the production of that larger measure of happiness to which their circum-

stances enable them to contribute. The following apostrophe to the legislature of Great Britain on behalf of the neglected but interesting natives of India, cannot be read without emotion.

“ O England, England, rouse ! in might send forth
 Thy Missionary train ;—from Eastern climes
 To drive fell Jagannat’h. Than tiger gaunt
 More fierce, more cruel, when the hunter’s spear
 Has chafed him in his lair, ’mid barren sands
 Crimsoned with blood, o’erspread with pilgrims’ bones,
 Reeking with baleful and infectious steams
 Of putrefaction, reigns that Moloch dire.
 Of all the rebel host that warred with heaven,
 Not one more ruthless. Groans of horror deep,
 The vulture’s screams, the howl of famished dogs,
 And serpents’ hiss, the jubilee of hell,
 Mark his procession. O’er a quaking soil
 Of human victims, who have claimed the palm
 Of martyrdom unholy, slowly roll
 His gory chariot wheels. Haste, haste, arise !
 Down to his den of wrath the demon hurl,
 With all his rites detestable, accursed !—
 Snatch from the alligator’s jaws the babe ;—
 From Ganges’ waves the father, ere he sinks,
 Plunged by his children’s hands. The widow’s pyre
 Awaits the sacrifice ; the cruel priests
 Have chained and bound her to her husband’s corse,
 The living to the dead !—she shrieks ! she dies !
 Statesmen of Britain, shame upon your rule,
 If e’er the smoke of such unhallowed rite
 Mount in your empire ! Quench th’ infernal fires
 With light from heaven. In each demon-cave
 Kindle the torch of Truth, the vampyre fiends
 Of hell dispersing. Haste that age of gold,
 By seers prophetic sung, when wide-diffused,
 The knowledge of Jehovah, as a flood,
 Shall mantle earth. Thrice-happy age, speed on !
 It comes ! it comes ! wan Superstition hears,
 Thro’ all her rock-scooped temples, such dread sounds
 Of wo, as rose, of yore, when Dagon fell
 Before the Ark, or Baal’s priests were slain—
 Sees all her giant idols sink to dust,
 Maugre their strength colossal—Bramah shakes
 Tremulous, as dew-drop on his lotos flower.
 Fierce Siva, the Destroyer, is destroyed !
 And Vishnu, falsely the Preserver named,
 Shivers and dies.—Their last avatar comes,
 Annihilation ! Happy age, speed on !
 The reign of Caste, the Brahmin’s reign is past ! ”

The poet, after commemorating the heroic benevolence of Sydney, Howard, Las Casas, Penn, and several

other illustrious philanthropists, gives some animated instructions to those who would participate in the pleasures of benevolence, and thus emulate the deeds which adorn these bright names: and cautions them against the selfish and malignant passions which would "freeze the genial current of the soul." Among these admonitions, that which is directed against religious intolerance is one of the most important, and is worthy of all acceptance.

“ ————— But what so perverts
And sears the heart, as Bigotry, that sees
In God a tyrant, partial and unjust;
In man, the victim of God's ire, pre-doomed
To realms of dread, unutterable, wo?
Stern Bigotry! thou foe to God Most High,
Yet daring to proclaim, with trumpet tongue,
Thyself God's friend; the friend more truly named
Of all that wars with God's most holy will,
Of all that battles with the good of man,
With Faith, Hope, Charity, and every grace
Of earth or heaven. Bane of Philosophy,
Arch-enemy of Truth—in mystic rites,
And bloody, joying; thou wouldst thought enchain,
Usurping God's prerogative, and rule
With hand of iron, and a heart of gall,
The world of mind. Thy arms, not those which win
Dominion justly in the realms of thought—
Knowledge and truth; but faggot, fire, and sword,
The implements of hell—and hell may loud
Applaud thy triumphs—yelling fiends may yoke
And drag thy gory car o'er realms laid waste
Beneath thy wrath—and for thy temple pile,
With brains and blood, the skulls of millions slain,
Racked, torn asunder, crucified and burned,
To serve and glorify Religion's cause!

Religion! child of God, whose seraph voice
Speaks peace and love, how is thy hallowed name
Usurped, profaned, dishonoured in the mouths
Of Bigotry, Hypocrisy, and Cant!
By diabolic alchymy, who turn
The bread of life to gall—who dash its cup
With tears and blood, and in thy injured name
Worship Oppression, Falsehood and Revenge;
Turn to a den of thieves the house of Prayer;
Where God gave blessing, uttering curses dire;
Dooming to hell whom God invokes to heaven!
Enormous blasphemy! the efflux foul
Of bosoms gorged to bursting with the bile
Of malice, God-forsaken, ignorant
Of God and bliss. Their thoughts Religion loaths,
Their deeds abhors. She with Benevolence

Walks hand in hand, nor ever from her side
 A moment wanders. Who would mount to heaven,
 Must win their smile, or never enter there."

The Fourth Book contains a solution of those doubts to which the varied aspect of events in this probationary scene has often given rise, respecting the divine benevolence. The poet describes himself as wandering "*with the Muse on Dalriada's shores—theme of her early song,*" under the baleful influence of mistrust. To his mind the numerous seeming objections to the goodness of the Author of the Universe, arising from the appearances of natural and moral evil in creation, present themselves in rapid succession: and he is on the point of yielding to despair, when an angel is described as revealing himself in vision to correct his erroneous judgment.—The celestial messenger distils upon the eyes of the doubter drops of some potent fluid, which purifies his sight like that of Diomede, and enables him to discern "things erst invisible." The irregularities which from time to time occur both in the natural and moral world are shown to be perfectly consistent with the wisdom and benevolence of the Supreme Being; and the ways of Providence are ably vindicated.

With the following passage we shall conclude our analysis of this admirable poem: admirable in its simplicity, and admirable for its tenderness and truth: admirable for the philosophical views which it unfolds, and for the pure and exalted piety which it breathes.

"From man's first dawn of being, 'till the night
 Of death comes o'er him, good beyond the ill
 Redundant teems. What sorrow, pain, or care,
 Corrodes the infant's bosom, as his nurse,
 Thrilled by the glories of his laughing eye,
 In playful fondness, folds him to her breast,
 And answers smile for smile? What grief entwines
 With coil envenomed round the bounding heart
 Of youth?—For him the world is passing fair;
 The heavens no cloud, the rose no thorn unfolds
 To mar their beauty. Ever-cheering Hope
 Flames in his eye;—young Love on purple wings,
 With sweet desire, fans gently into life
 A thousand new emotions—while each power
 Of Taste now quickens to perception keen,
 Imbibing rapture from the fair and good.
 In manhood's riper season, when he owns
 A husband's name and father's, deeper flows
 The tide of his enjoyment:—all its springs

Are multiplied ; and now the active toils
 Of public life, the statesman's councils sage,
 The artist's emulation, and the deeds
 Of daring enterprize, yield sweet employ.
 Then, as the sun exulting in mid heaven,
 He joys to scatter round him, far and wide,
 Blessings on man.—And when, at length, he sinks
 In life's horizon, still he sheds around
 A tranquillizing lustre, 'till he reach
 His goal in triumph, and in glory. See
 The village Nestor, in the happy task
 Of doing good, grown grey, in summer eve
 Beneath the oak, amid the village ring,
 A patriarch sage, of all his tribe revered,
 His children's children, a long progeny,
 Clinging around his knee :—As there he speaks
 Of past adventures,—from experience draws
 Just rules of life, and shows the listening group
 How man's felicity must ever flow
 From faith, and hope, and the approving voice
 Of conscience, God's vicegerent in the heart,
 Think'st thou old age is wearisome and dark,
 Of pleasure destitute ? Does joy not fill
 The seaman's bosom when he furls his sail
 In the calm heaven ?—Thus escaped the storms
 And shoals of fortune, pleased the veteran views
 His life's long retrospect, a sparkling wake
 Upon the tide of time. Before him shines
 The star of Faith, and onward to th' abode
 Of bliss immortal leads. When gentle Death—
 Of benefactors he the last and best—
 Has o'er him shed his soft oblivious dews,—
 He wakes to sleep no more ;—he wakes in heaven.”



III. *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828.* By Captain BASIL HALL, R. N. 3 vols. 12mo.

WE notice this amusing but prejudiced and now almost forgotten book, for the purpose of laying before our readers the following account of a Sunday spent in Boston. It is needless to inform many of our readers that the preacher was Dr. CHANNING.

“As our object on arriving at any place was always to see, as soon as possible, whatever was most remarkable, we gladly availed ourselves of a friend's convoy to one of the Unitarian churches, on the next day, Sunday, the 7th of October, when a celebrated champion of these doctrines was to preach.

“A considerable change, it appears, had taken place at Boston, of late years, in the religious tenets of the inhabitants; and Unitarianism

rianism, or, as I find it called in their own publications, Liberal Christianity, had made great advances, chiefly under the guidance of this distinguished person.

“ The pastor had just returned to his flock after an absence of some months, and took advantage of the occasion to review, in a rapid manner, the rise and progress, as well as the peculiar nature, of the doctrines he so powerfully advocates. He struck me as being, in many respects, a very remarkable preacher; particularly in the quietness, or repose of his manner. How far this proceeded from the simplicity of his thoughts, or from the unaffected plainness of his language, I cannot exactly say; but the power which it gave him of introducing, when it suited his purpose, occasional passages of great force and richness of expression, was one of which he availed himself with much skill. It was manifest, indeed, that the influence he held, or appeared to hold, over the minds of his hearers, was derived mainly from their reliance on his sincerity, whatever some of them might have thought of his doctrines. The tone of his voice was familiar, though by no means vulgar; on the contrary, it might almost be called musical, and was certainly very pleasing to the ear; but whether this arose from the sounds themselves, or from the eloquent arrangement of the words, I never thought of enquiring, as I was carried along irresistibly by the smooth current of his eloquence.

“ He began by greeting his friends with great suavity of address; and if there did appear a little touch of vanity in the implied importance which he attached to all that concerned himself in the eyes of his flock, it partook not in the slightest degree of arrogance, but was very allowable, considering the real influence he had so long enjoyed. Indeed, from what I saw and heard, I should think he rather fell short than exceeded the limits to which he might have safely gone, when speaking to his congregation of the feelings, the hopes, and the fears, which rose in his mind on returning to his wonted duties, with health somewhat repaired, but not restored. At first, this familiarity of tone, and almost colloquial simplicity of expression, sounded so strangely from the pulpit, that the impression was not altogether favourable, but there soon appeared so much real kindness in all he said, that even we, though strangers, were not untouched by it.

“ He then gradually embarked on the great ocean of religious controversy, but with such consummate skill, that we scarcely knew we were at sea till we discovered that no land was in sight. After assuring us that he had been called to the front of the battle, though in truth, he was a man of peace, and a hater of all disputation, he described, with singular effect, the impression left on his mind, one day recently, by hearing a discourse in a country church where narrow views of mental liberty had been inculcated. Nothing certainly could be more poetical than the contrast which he drew between the confined doctrines he had heard within the walls, and what he eloquently called the free beauties of thought and of nature without.

“ By the time the preacher reached this part of his discourse, our curiosity was much excited, and I, for my own part, felt thoroughly caught, and almost prepared to go along with him into any region he pleased to carry me.

“He next gave us an account of his share in the progress of the controversies to which he alluded, and explained again and again to us, in a variety of different shapes, that his great end in advocating the Unitarian, or Liberal doctrines, was to set the human mind entirely free on religious subjects, without any reference, he earnestly assured us, to one sect more than to another, but purely to the end that there might be, in the world at large, the fullest measure of intellectual independence of which our nature is capable. He spoke a good deal of the Christian dispensation, to which, however, he ascribed no especial illuminating powers; but constantly implied, that every man was to judge for himself as to the degree and value of the light shed by Revelation. Reason and conscience, according to his view of the matter, ought to be our sole guides through life, and the efficacy of our Saviour’s atonement was not, as far as I could discover, even once alluded to, except for the purpose of setting it aside. He earnestly exhorted his hearers not to rely entirely upon the Scriptures, nor upon him, their pastor, nor upon any other guides, human or divine, if I understood him correctly, but solely upon the independent efforts of their own minds. Our Saviour, as “the first of the sons of God,” he held up as an example worthy of all imitation; but the indispensable necessity of his vicarious sacrifice, was clearly denied.

“The Christian religion, he told us, as first preached by the Apostles, was well suited to those early times. But, according to him, it soon became corrupted, and was never afterwards purified, even at the Reformation. Much, therefore, still remained to be done; and one step in this great work, he led us to infer, was actually in progress before us, in the extension of Unitarianism.

“As it is quite foreign to my purpose to enter into the details of this controversy, I have merely mentioned, as impartially as possible, what seem to be the leading points of a doctrine which has obtained a complete ascendancy in one of the most enlightened parts of the country, and is rapidly spreading itself over the United States, in spite of the efforts of the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches.”

As this sketch, however graphic and interesting, is evidently drawn by no impartial hand, we subjoin from a late number of *the Athenæum*, the following description of this eminent preacher, by a person less under the influence of prejudice than Captain HALL appears to have been:

“Dr. CHANNING is not an old man—but for many years he has been considered, and has considered himself, at death’s door. It was to his hearers as if every sermon must be his last. His mind, however, is in full vigour, and his writings, and even his eloquence, in this feeble and dying state, breathe an undiminished enthusiasm. In person, he is singularly small, and of the slightest possible frame; seen in the street, wrapped in a cloak, and covered with a clerical hat, he looks a child in the

habiliments of a man. (We were struck, by the way, when in Edinburgh, with his resemblance to Jeffrey, though a much smaller man even than the critic of *The Edinburgh Review*.) In private conversation, he seems dependent, suffering, affectionate; his voice is querulous and low; his step and manner marked with debility; and, if you did not study closely his head and eye, you would never imagine yourself in the presence of a man in whom there lived a spark of energy. He creeps up the pulpit stairs with a feebleness almost painful—while the congregation is hushed in anxious and breathless sympathy—sinks, exhausted, into the corner, and rises, at last, to give out the psalm, pale, and, apparently, unequal to the service. A dead silence follows the first sound of his voice; and they may well listen—for never were poet's words read with such cadences of music. A prayer follows—low, brief, reverential, and wholly free from the irrelevance and familiarity common in extempore addresses to the Deity. Another psalm follows—read, perhaps, more distinctly, and with less tremulous debility than the first—and, as the echo of the organ dies away in the arches of the roof, he rises for his sermon. His cloak has been thrown aside, and he stands before his audience, the slightest drapery of a human frame that would serve to keep his soul upon the earth. Across his forehead streams a single lock of soft, brown hair, contrasted strongly with its transparent whiteness; his thin and hollow features are calmly and merely intellectual in their pain-worn line; and his eye, glowing with the unnatural brightness of sickness, large, lambent, and clear, beams with inexpressible benignity. His voice, the most musical to which it has ever been our lot to listen, first heard, is calm and deliberate, and is not much varied till he has laid down the premises of his discourse. Ten minutes have elapsed, and you have forgotten the man in the interest he has awakened, by his truth-like and lucid statement of his theme. He is less a preacher to the hundreds about you, than an intelligent friend, making a communication of personal interest to yourself.—Your mind is wholly his own. At this point, the strange and peculiar cadences of his voice begin to strengthen and to change: his sentences are more varied—from the brief and impressive antithesis, to the eloquent appeal, rolling onward, with progressive pathos and energy; and his

tones, which you had thought so silvery sweet, fill and gather power, and seem illimitable in compass and expression. Passive and almost motionless till now, his slight frame seems to dilate, his countenance kindles, his lips seem burning with earnestness and fire; and, when his thin arm is stretched forth, with its wasted hand, at the thrilling cries of his appeal, he seems transformed to a prophet—instinct with supernatural revelation. He goes on, and his discourse is full of surprise to the mind and to the ear. Conclusions spring suddenly, and yet, with irresistible logic, from the commonest premises; and his enunciation, to which we again recur, and which is as varied in its stops, and as curious in its capabilities, as an organ, changes from pathos to command—from calmness to impassioned fervour—from the most measured and lingering music to the most rapid and accumulating enthusiasm—with a wondrous facility, which seems the immediate and burning overflow of inspiration. He ceases—and disappears—and there is no stir in the congregation. He is the first to break his own spell;—he has given out the concluding hymn of the service before a sound is heard from the entranced and breathless multitude before him!

Intelligence.

INSTALLATION OF THE REV. SAMUEL C. NELSON, IN DOWNPATRICK.

THE First Congregation of Presbyterians in Downpatrick, having given an unanimous call to the Rev. Samuel C. Nelson, late of Dromore, to become assistant to his father, the Rev. Dr. Nelson, in the pastoral office, among them, and the call having been accepted, he was, on Wednesday the 18th inst., solemnly installed as Minister of the Congregation, by the Presbytery of Antrim. On this interesting occasion, the Rev. J. Scott Porter, of Belfast, introduced the service, and preached from the 1st Corinthians, xiv. 20, "*In understanding be men.*" From these words, the preacher illustrated, at great length, the duty of exercising the utmost freedom of inquiry in all religious concerns: and concluded by exhorting the Congregation of Downpatrick to maintain the same principles of religious liberty which their ancestors and predecessors had so manfully vindicated, upwards of one hundred years ago, in the days of "the immortal Nevin." The Congregation having finally signified their adherence to the call presented to Mr. Nelson, and he having also publicly declared his acceptance of it, the Rev. Jas. Carley, of Antrim, delivered an impressive address to the Congregation, and the newly elected pastor, explaining and enforcing their

respective duties and obligations. In the evening, the Congregation of Downpatrick entertained Mr. Nelson, the members of the Presbytery, and various other Ministers, at dinner, in Denvir's Hotel, Doctor M'Kittrick, in the chair. Between 70 and 80 gentlemen sat down to an excellent entertainment; but several were prevented from attending, by want of room for their accommodation. The meeting was addressed in eloquent terms, which called forth frequent expressions of enthusiastic sympathy, from every individual present, by Mr. Wellington Nelson, the Rev. Samuel C. Nelson, David Lindsay, Esq. the Revs. John Porter, James Carley, Fletcher Blakely, William Heron, Classon Porter and J. Scott Porter, and also by James Murland, Esq. Henry Pilson, Esq. W. Pater-son, Esq. of Killileagh. — Harris, Esq. of London, (on behalf of the Established Church,) and Mr. Reynolds, of Downpatrick, (a Roman Catholic,) in acknowledging various toasts and sentiments, given from the chair, coupled with their names. The Chairman, and Doctor Bingham, who officiated as Croupier, also returned thanks on their healths being proposed, and warmly received by the company. The party separated at an early hour, gratified by the events of an evening, spent in the interchange of kindly, liberal, and enlightened sentiments, and in mutual encouragement, to every work and labour of love.

OBITUARY.

MRS. S. SMITH.

Died—on the 9th of January, LETITIA, relict of the late Samuel Smith, esq. Balnamore, aged 59. She was exemplary throughout life for the appropriate excellencies of the female character—discharging with the greatest fidelity and unwearied assiduity the duties of the conjugal and parental relations. Brought up in the doctrines of the Established Church and in a part of Ireland in which the principles and even the name of Dissent were unknown, her thoughts were turned to the subject; and she considerably, upon reading and reflection, became a Unitarian Protestant Dissenter. To this anchor of her hope she clung steadfastly to the last—constantly meditating upon the great principles—weighing every argument alleged against them, and consulting patiently and assiduously the Word of God. She consequently remained unshaken in her own convictions—took a lively interest in the success of our great cause, and experienced exquisite enjoyment in spiritual communion with those whose religious principles she approved.

Died—On Wednesday the 18th ult. Mrs. HALYDAY, (sister to John Melling, esq.) of Newry. She had reached her 88th year; and, though bowed down by bodily infirmity, and long confinement, retained the full enjoyment of her mental faculties to the last.—She possessed a richly cultivated mind, and could display the treasures of her reading and observation by conversational powers of no ordinary kind. She was sincerely religious; but her piety was sober, rational, and consoling. Resignation to the will of God, and lively gratitude for his mercies, strongly marked her character to the close of life: and she approached the dark valley of the shadow of death with the composure of a Christian, and in the steadfast hope, through Christ, of a glorious resurrection to eternal life.

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VOL. VI.

PREACHING AND PREACHERS.

NO. X.

THE LATE REV. EDWARD IRVING.

(Concluded from Vol. V. p. 571.)

WE resume, for the purpose of bringing to a conclusion, our remarks on Mr. Irving. In a preceding paper we took a rapid survey of his history, from its first commencement, up to the period of his settlement in London. In attempting to account for the extraordinary success which attended his early ministrations in the great metropolis, we attributed it as well to the peculiarities by which he was distinguished, as to the powers with which he was endowed; and of those powers and peculiarities, physical, intellectual and moral, we proposed, successively, to speak. Having been precluded, by want of room, from going, upon that occasion, beyond the first head of our classification, we should now proceed to say something of the others. But, before doing so, we think it more convenient to finish our hurried sketch of his personal career.

For a considerable length of time, the town continued to follow him with unabated eagerness. The chapel in Hatton Garden had, from the first, proved exceedingly severe upon the suffering crowds which were, every Sunday, "distilled almost to jelly," by the act of squeezing into it. To remedy this inconvenience, munificent subscriptions were collected, for the purpose of procuring a place of worship of more suitable dimensions, and the new "National Scotch Church," a commodious and handsome building, was speedily erected. But, scarcely had Mr. Irving been installed in his new edifice, when the voice of popular acclamation seemed, strangely, to wax faint. No sooner could the preacher be seen, without risking the loss either of your temper or the skirts of your coat, than the anxiety to see him appeared gradually to die away. The truth was that the wonder had reached the term of existence allotted to its tribe. That great portion of the public with whom all sentiments are

invariably in excess, and every man is either "God or Devil," having run after him with an irrational admiration, began to decry him with an irrational contempt. That he felt the change, and that acutely, it would be inconsistent with human nature to deny. The last infirmity of noble minds was not a failing from which a mind like his could well be freed. Gradually, but we believe, insensibly, the attention of the world had become necessary to his peace. The applause of the public was the breath of his nostrils. Against this principle of evil he subsequently strove with undoubted sincerity, but with questionable success. Never could he, "when all around grew drear and dark," look back upon the brightness of his early triumphs, without some feeling of conscious exultation. Years afterwards, fallen as he was on evil days and evil tongues, he recurred to the period of his unprecedented popularity with feelings curiously mingled. An instance may be found in the dedication, to his congregation, of his work upon the "Last Days." He counts public opinion "so volatile and so wicked, that, upon the whole, he would rather have it against him than with him." Yet he rejoices in the recollection that "by a man spoken against, reviled, suspected, and avoided by those who usurp the Evangelical name as if it were all their own, his God did speak unto the heads, and representatives, and nobles, and princes of this nation."

The public had not long begun to slacken their attendance, when Mr. Irving commenced that series of subjects which, with very little interval, occupied him during the remainder of his ministry. Of these the first was prophecy. This is a topic which, according to somebody or other, (Warburton, we think,) either finds a man mad, or leaves him so. It is the true perpetual motion in theological mechanics. To square its circle of historical events, has bewildered many a brain. In every age of religious excitement it has attracted, powerfully, the minds of the castle-building and the contemplative. At the period to which we are alluding it was pursued with ardour by a variety of students; but none dashed into it half so daringly as Mr. Irving. Whether or not he actually believed that he had been enlightened upon the subject by a direct illumination from on high, it might not be easy to determine. Certain it is that modesty of conjecture did not distinguish the tone of his

interpretations. God's existence could not be more authoritatively laid down, than was the meaning of his most obscure communications. You would think that in the opinion of the preacher there was only one book in the Bible of which the sense was indisputably evident,—and that book, the Revelations. Unlike most of those who have applied themselves to such matters, he had not the penetration, or, perhaps, the prudence, to perceive that the events prophetically foreshadowed were to be realized in times far distant. He laid the scene in our own day, and, almost led you to expect that the fulfilment of Sunday's prediction might appear in Monday's papers. To proclaim the immediate overthrow of Popery and Infidelity was the great object of his teachings. The evolutions of the great battle of Armageddon, which was to be fought sometime in the present year, in the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean Sea, were described with military minuteness. Young Napoleon, Mr. Irving thought it more than probable, was, on that momentous day, to head the combined forces of Popery and Infidelity; but whether or not the Duke of Wellington was to command the armies of the Church militant, we cannot now remember. Poor man! how we used to think what a part in the conflict he, himself, would play, if placed right opposite O'Connell and his crew, and furnished with a good claymore! For a considerable time no sound was heard in the National Scotch Church, but the voice of prophetic exposition. But, as the play-bills say, it was at length withdrawn to make room for other novelties; and the next produced was the nature of the Sacraments. Speaking from recollection, we should say that, upon this subject, Mr. Irving advocated, though with some additions and improvements, that medley of the unintelligible and the untrue which constitutes the Baptismal and Communion services of the Church of England. If he did not actually believe in "Baptismal Regeneration," he believed in something very like it. To hold that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper were no more than the memorials of his body broken, and his blood shed, he denounced as awful heresy, to which, so long as the advocates of Protestantism adhered, "the Papists," he maintained, "had *clean* the better of the argument." These difficult investigations employed, (for brevity was never his most shining virtue,) not a little of his time. At length, how-

over, having been sufficiently discussed, they were allowed to sink to rest. But he was never without some source of fresh excitement. Proclaiming, at one moment, distress of nations, with perplexity ; groping, at another, through all the difficulties of the physical and metaphysical obscure ; he could, at a third, stoop to discuss the passing politics of the day. Burke defends an establishment, upon the ground that it makes politics religious. At present, an establishment is assailed upon the ground, that instead of making politics religious, it makes religion political. But that the favoured clergy are not sufficiently aware of the public duties which he conceived to be incumbent on them, was a calamity which Mr. Irving always indignantly bewailed. The following passage can leave no doubt as to its author.

“Ah, how little we ministers of an Established Church bethink us of our high political calling !—some in their pride levelling themselves with the king and his estates, and saying “Let us alone,—meddle not with us,”—others, again, in their Puritanism, saying, “Ah, religion hath nothing to do with politics.” Of whom, I perceive, at this day, the former to be growing in the Universities, especially the old Tory University, and it is rank Papistry ; the latter again I perceive to be universal amongst the Evangelicals, who have learned from the dissenters. *If I were the king*, I would order a rod to the back of those symbolizers with the Papacy, to teach them better obedience ; and I would pay the others off, and let them go about their own occupation of preaching without any respect to the empire.”*

Of this calling, however, he, at least, was never forgetful. At the period of which we speak, “Liberality” and everything approaching to it, had become an utter abomination in his sight ; for frequently as we have heard him pray to be delivered from the sin, we could never think that his supplications were extorted by any very violent temptation to commit it. Against the Catholic Relief Bill, in every stage of its progress, he preached with great vehemence. When the Repeal of the Corporation and Test acts was determined on, not content with thundering against the measure from the pulpit, he wrote a letter to king George the 4th, calling on him as “High Constable for Christ,” (a title by which we

* Discourses on the “Last Days.”

once heard him designate that monarch) to withhold the royal assent. These, however, as far as he himself was personally concerned, were things of little consequence. But matters more important were approaching. Hitherto his speculations, though they had attracted some notice, had entailed but little obloquy. He had broached some novel views on prophecy; but even the soberest amongst the religious world were too much mixed up with novel views on prophecy to do more than shake the head. He had originated or revived strange notions respecting the sacraments; still the sacraments do not fall within the magic circle of Evangelical essentials. But the vials of a hotter wrath were now to be emptied, and shaken out upon him. In approaching the doctrine of the Trinity, it behoves all believers most diligently to guard their steps. Many will be the stones of stumbling in the way of every man who does not keep, with care, the beaten paths of phraseology. Over one of these Mr. Irving fell, never to rise again. In one view of this doctrine it presents three persons in *one* nature, and in another view of the same doctrine, it presents *two* natures in one person. Neither of these positions is, altogether, destitute of difficulty; and the joinder of both does not tend, by any means, to make the matter plainer. Indeed, to think at all upon the hypostatic union, is almost necessarily dangerous to the system of which it forms a part. The belief of the existence in but *one* person, both of *two* natures and *two* wills, is a notion which the human mind must always hesitate to receive; and we find, accordingly, that the monophysite and the monothelite heresies, are amongst the earliest in the records of the church. "The Irving heresy" (as it is called) regards the *human* nature of our Lord. It teaches simply, that he took upon him man's nature in its *fallen* state. This is the head and front of the offending, the sum and substance of the crime. He started no difficulties,—he expressed no doubts,—he probably but spoke the opinions entertained by the vast majority of such Trinitarians as could be said to entertain any opinions at all upon the point. One would think that the Athanasian Creed should have protected him from, at least, his Episcopalian adversaries. But those who denounced its damnation fourteen times a year, upon all persons who should presume to deny that our Saviour was *God*, "of the *substance* of his *Father*," could not

perceive that the correlative proposition, that he was *man* "of the *substance* of his *mother*," was supported by a sanction equally tremendous. But we shall not go into these points, although in the exercise of our Unitarian impartiality, having no concern with either party, we cannot hesitate to pronounce the odium cast upon Mr. Irving, about this subject, to be altogether undeserved. Manifold, indeed, were the accusations brought against him. He was accused of making our Saviour a sinner. He indignantly denied the charge, and called for proof. That proof was never given. Indeed so sensitive was he upon this head, that he, from the first, distinguished the *nature* which men inherit from Adam, from the *sin* which men inherit from Adam, (two things, be it observed, Calvinistically different) and held that our Lord was begotten in the *first* alone, the *second* having been precluded by his miraculous conception. But nothing could avert the coming tempest. Orthodoxy collecting all its might, rose, furious, from its lair. The cry was raised, in every quarter, that the ATONEMENT was in danger! and its defenders rushed tumultuously to the ramparts of the Faith. Of what a pitiless storm of pamphlets, periodicals, pulpit rebukes, and private remonstrances, did the hapless delinquent sustain the pelt-ing? In vain did he exclaim that he had preached no new doctrine,—that he had but taken his stand upon the ancient ways,—that fathers, reformers, creeds and confessions were all with him upon the point. He might as well have been haranguing the winds of heaven. In England he was branded with "Socinianism;" he who always consigned Socinians to the torments of the *next* world, and called for their punishment in *this*. In Scotland he was branded with "Bourignonism;" he who continued to denounce all the heresies of Anne as decidedly as man could do. His presbytery took the matter up, arraigned, tried and censured him. The most intolerant body of men under the sun,—the religious world,—cast out, with ignominy, a name never much in the odour of sanctity with any of the class. Harrassed by innumerable foes,—deserted by all who might have yielded him support,—vituperation, hard to be endured, poured upon him in one quarter;—pity, still harder to be borne by his proud heart, offered to him in another,—he stood determined, indeed, but he stood almost alone. Inflamed by ceaseless controversy, his mind, always ex-

citable, became heated far above a healthy temperature. Public opinion had, in this instance, treated him tyrannically, and he was thus prepared for open rebellion against even its legitimate authority. His spirit set its teeth, as it were, against the injustice he had suffered, and frowned a defiance, almost fierce, against the perpetrators of the wrong. A mind, stung into such a state, was naturally prepared to believe what was incredible to the rest of the world, and to believe it because it was incredible to the rest of the world. Cast out by the zealots, without thereby securing the sympathy of the rational, he only awaited some temptation to fly still more apart from both. It was not long till that temptation came.

Some weavers of Port-Glasgow, in the excitement of religious phrensy, felt themselves impelled to the utterance of sounds, of which nothing could be said but that they were not English. Enthusiasm passed itself under the *alias* of inspiration; and the powers poured out upon the day of Pentecost, were identified with the gibberish of fanaticism gone frantic. The subsequent adventures of the "Tongues" are known to every body. Posterity will probably regard them as a curious chapter in the religious history of the nineteenth century. Certain it is that still the strong delusion spread. Men of all callings and professions became converts. The clergy of the two established churches were represented, respectively, by Nicholas Armstrong, and the Messrs. Tait. Forensic acumen was unable to break down the witnesses for the miracles, and Mr. Erskine the well-known advocate, published his conviction that the "manifestations" were of God. That there was enough to satisfy the practical sagacity of the man of business, was proved by the adhesion of Mr. Drummond, the celebrated banker. Mr. Spenser Percival, at that time, we believe, in Parliament, laid the wisdom of this world's statesmanship at the feet of artisans, whose divine commission he felt himself constrained to recognize. But of all the converts who were added to the infant church, Mr. Irving was, by far, the most distinguished. He threw himself into the cause with his natural impetuosity. To describe the scenes exhibited in his church, would only be to repeat the newspapers of the day. For the credit of our rational nature, we are glad that it is not necessary to describe them. The nuisance arose, at length, to an

intolerable height. The trustees of the chapel determined to abate it. It became requisite to select some other building, in which the shrieks of the delirious might excite the sorrow of the pious and the scoffs of the profane; and Mr. Irving and his adherents took refuge in a bazaar, in Oxford-street, fitted up for the lectures of Robert Owen, a visionary of another kind, who still persevered in his benevolent but unsuccessful efforts, to parallelogram the world into happiness and virtue. Here the former doings were again renewed. But care, and labour, and "thoughts beyond the reaching of his soul," had combined to work the ruin of the leader's frame. Still, however, he continued to exert himself with unabated zeal. For the purpose of advancing the cause to which he had dedicated himself, he determined to revisit Scotland. In the latter end of last year he reached Glasgow. Twelve years before, burning with high hopes of usefulness and glory, he had left that town for London, and now, wasted in body, and wildered in mind, he came back to it to die. His maladies rapidly increased, and he felt that the hand of death was on him. "Why did you not sooner send for me?" inquired the surgeon, after he had, in some degree, relieved the intensity of the patient's sufferings. "*I sent for the elders of the church,*" was the characteristic answer.* Thus, on the 6th of December, after singing with his father-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Martin, the 43d Psalm, in Hebrew,—"*Judge me, O Lord, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation,*"—he passed from this agitated scene into that peaceful habitation "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

We are now to say something of his powers as a preacher. We know that upon this point there exists considerable difference of opinion. Many persons who admired his fine physical qualifications, are accustomed to speak most contemptuously of his mental. Indeed it is probable, that their contempt of the one will be in exact proportion to their admiration of the other. When one cause seems adequate to account for the phenomena, their philosophy will not admit the operation of a second. It appears to us, however, that, as a preacher, Mr. Irving occupied a high rank, and that he would have occupied a higher, had he not been too ambitious of the highest.

* Christian Pioneer, No. 1, N. S. p. 29.

His style of composition was, in our days, exclusively his own. From the writers of Queen Anne's time and their successors, he evidently turned with contempt. The sugar-candy style of Addison, melting sweetly in the reader's mouth, he altogether nauseated. As little did he seem inclined to fetter himself with the mechanical rhythm of Johnson. The freer forms of speech in which our older writers revelled, were more accordant with his feelings, and he early imbibed a just admiration of "that noble language in which Spenser wrote the *Faery Queen*, and Milton discovered the *Areopagitica* to men, to angels, and to eternity." One of the first books, not studied as a task, which fell into his hands, was the "*Ecclesiastical Polity*" of Hooker. He read it again and again with insatiable eagerness, and its periods, as well as its principles, took permanent possession of his mind. To the charge of imitation committed deliberately and of malice afore-thought, he could safely plead not guilty. He did not, like some, translate his thoughts into that ancient tongue, as into a foreign language. He spoke it with as much ease as though he had been native there, "and to the manner born."

He has been often called the copyist of Dr. Chalmers. In our opinion this was not the fact. That there is some general resemblance between the composition of the two divines, we by no means dispute, and the connexion which once existed between them, naturally attracted more attention to the circumstance, than it would, otherwise, have claimed. Dr. Chalmers has long sentences, and frequent inversions, and so has Mr. Irving; but, beyond this, it would be difficult to discover any similarity. The latter writes in an English style; in an ancient English style, no doubt; yet still in an English style. But, as far as our literature is concerned, it is Dr. Chalmers, and not his friend, who, for the most part, makes his revelations in an unknown tongue. The former is the greatest mannerist of all our living authors, and while in his manner there is, perhaps, a little which may be traced to Jeremy Taylor, there is a great deal which belongs to Dr. Chalmers only.

The tone of thinking of the preachers of whom we speak, is still more distinct. It is not merely that they treat of topics widely different. This would be quite consistent with a mutual resemblance. But it is clear that they have chosen different topics, in consequence

of an intellectual disagreement, which would have necessarily induced them to treat the same topics differently. Both are men of strong imagination and strong feeling. But in the mind of Dr. Chalmers these qualities are subservient, while in that of Mr. Irving these qualities are despotic. Judgment preserves due order with the one, where, with the other, all is anarchy. The one is philosophic in his most imaginative flights, while the other transmutes into the fanciful every topic which he touches. Even in their best estate, the productions of Mr. Irving present nothing but a rich confusion. No consistency of design; no gradual working out of a well defined idea; no regular subordination of the various parts to the advancement of the ultimate effect, is ever visible. Some impulse of a stormy sensibility is perpetually pushing him into paradox. Some illusion of his excited imagination for ever leads him from his onward way. The mind of Dr. Chalmers has always a cast of the practical about it. To bring Calvinism down to the common affairs of life, as this great man has attempted in his "Commercial Discourses," is a striking proof of this. The political economist shines through the preacher. With Mr. Irving, upon the other hand, the most practical things are turned into problems. He cannot speak of the Lord's Supper without flying off into the vainest speculations. Shrewd, pointed and sagacious, Dr. Chalmers is a Scotchman, every inch; while the mystic wildness which belongs to Mr. Irving is essentially Germanic.

The truth is, we think, that the main elements of Mr Irving's original success, were such as may be termed *moral*. That ardent temperament which was afterwards his weakness, was primarily his strength. He came down from Scotland with a very high estimation of his calling, and, it must be admitted, with by no means a low appreciation of himself. He might, if it had pleased him, have been enfolded in the embrace of the Evangelicals, who would, readily, have opened their arms to receive him. But, from the first, he stood imprudently aloof from that influential body. "The dull, monotonous, unimaginative dogmatizings of modern saints, their constant babbling about simple reliance, and simple dependance upon Christ, instead of more scriptural and sound-minded calls to activity and perseverance after perfection,"—(this language is his own)—he reprobated as

a defective exhibition of Christianity. He aimed at a higher object than to terrify into the atonement. To play a mighty part upon a mighty theatre, for God and Christ, elevated an imagination heated by the admiration of our old reformers. *The Church* was to have her ancient dignity asserted, and no longer to sheathe, ignobly, the two-edged sword which she was privileged to wield. She, the great arbitress of human life and human duty, was not to immure herself in a technical theology, but to march majestically forth into the world, and awe into subjection its fashion and its false philosophy. Accordingly, to such a task did Mr. Irving, boldly and fearlessly, address himself. He had a certain "proud precipitance of soul," which was often indiscreet. But a high and manly tone of mind was still apparent, and there are some indiscretions with which the public sympathizes. Timidity and tameness invariably disgust, but the very reverse of these are the defects of Mr. Irving. Is it by prophesyings of smooth things, "by bated breath and whispering humbleness," that he flatters into patronage the nobles of the land? "No, no, we have enough of this sycophancy of the soul, this unbonnetting of manhood, and selling of even-handed justice, in time, to allow it to go farther. Let them of elevated places bear the brunt of the judgment which they have braved; let them reap as they have chosen to sow. What is that to us that we should pine or mope with melancholy over them, more than over others?"* But, perhaps, though he seems to hold our aristocracy so cheap, he has in greater veneration that "march of intellect," which so much distinguishes our times. Upon this topic, the following is a sample of his coaxings. "Ye men of little books; ye men of little minds; ye men of articles in reviews and paragraphs in newspapers; ye dwarfs when compared with the stature of your fathers; lay not the flattering unction to your souls that you are too learned and too lofty to stoop to such a feeling as the love of God."† All our customs are an offence to him. He seems to know nothing of the pleasure of making money. The *soiree* of the Duchess has no delights for him. The natural feeling contained in the following sentence is not unhappily expressed:—"Between the oppression of business and the oppression

* Orations. † Last Days.

of fashion, the tender and delicate and blessed abode of our natural affections, which our fathers called 'home,' is almost crushed to pieces, and the very word hath changed its meaning, so that 'at home,' now signifies being surrounded by a multitude, and 'not at home,' almost signifies being alone with your children." He flies at every thing he sees. Now he soars into a sublime panegyric upon Wordsworth's poetry, and anon, he comes down, souse, upon Jeremy Bentham and the Utilitarians. Nothing can be more abhorred in his imagination than "French Cookery." His gorge, actually, rises at the antichristian art. "They talk about our fathers as if they were a set of sensualists; I wot well that they would have been ashamed of us their children!" Meats offered to idols, and city feasts, he would place pretty much upon a par. An alderman might be angry at him for touching, irreverently, a solemn subject; but cares he any thing for an alderman? Not he; no more than he would for a Prince of the Blood Royal. Some may remember Southey's foolish "Vision of Judgment;" and Byron's profane parody upon the Laureate's production. Both are criticised, by name, in the "Argument," in a style very far indeed from complimentary. When he dislikes the principle upon which the "Society of Useful Knowledge" carry on their operations, it is thus he speaks of them. "*These apostles of Satan* will go about to teach the people, that by means of what they call 'Treatises of Useful Knowledge,' they will bring about the keeping of the ten commandments. These idle and filthy dreamers, do dream, do dote, they are demented, to think that they will bring about a moral population without the power of the Holy Ghost."

We are sensible that these things, taken by themselves, would convey a very exaggerated idea of the preacher's eccentricities. They are unquestionably extreme cases. But they will serve to illustrate the object which we have in view; which is, to convey some idea of the headlong impetuosity as well as the daring courage with which Mr. Irving threw himself upon every subject as it rose; and of the peculiarities, occasionally not a little piquant, to which this temperament gave birth. There is, to be sure, little in them which most other men could not say, but there is a great deal which most other men would not say; and no matter how produced, such things are, unquestionably, well calculated to attract a crowd-

ed auditory. Many persons would be forcibly arrested by a manner so foreign from the usual dulness and decorum of the pulpit, and others who had no disposition to be edified, might at least calculate upon being entertained.

But was Mr. Irving, all peculiarity apart, a man of first-rate talents? This question cannot well be answered, without some reference to those notorious aberrations from right reason which are universally admitted. Many will be inclined to hold that such a deplorable conclusion to his career undeniably proves him to have been a driveller from the beginning. Some, upon the other hand, will think themselves justified in measuring the height of his elevation by the very depth of his fall. It appears to us that neither opinion is correct, and that the truth, upon this occasion, as upon most others, is to be found between the two extremes.

“Great wits are sure to madness near allied,”

says Dryden, and the expression has passed into a proverb. A poet of profounder genius has questioned its correctness. Coleridge, in a characteristic passage of his “Literary Life,” after admitting that, as far as strong sensibility is *alone* concerned, there is that tendency to disorganization, of which his predecessor speaks, observes, that “a more than usual rapidity of association, a more than usual power of passing from thought to thought, and image to image,” are corrective qualities equally essential, and that “in the due modification of each by the other, the genius itself consists.” We think the criticism just. It is not the Shakespeares and the Miltons of the race of the mighty orbs of human intellect, who are likely to shoot wildly from the spheres in which they harmoniously move. Such men neither apply themselves to labours which issue in distraction, nor in them does disappointment phrensy an ungovernable sensibility. It is still more clear that individuals of decidedly inferior powers, are not exposed to the unsoundness of which we speak. The lightning that scathes the pine upon the mountain top, is harmless to the “fat weed” that vegetates below. It is ambitious men of secondary, though considerable powers—men who have too much activity not to attempt, and too little energy to succeed—men who go down out of the ship, only to sink within the waters—men who soar too high to escape

the storm, and yet never rise into the serene; it is men of this kind for whom danger is to be apprehended. Of this kind, as it appears to us, was Mr. Irving. He had more than sufficient of the "*ingenium perfervidum Scottorum*." But he wanted that cool and philosophic turn of mind which equally distinguishes his countrymen.

We have mentioned Coleridge. With this individual, one of the most remarkable men of the age, Mr. Irving, shortly after his settlement in London, became closely intimate. Coleridge was, probably, the most eloquent conversationalist that ever lived, and those who know anything of the peculiar nature of the revelations uttered by a voice which still tingles in the ears of many—revelations which have made the little back parlour of Surgeon Gillman's house at Highgate, holy ground to hearts which have outlived the God of their idolatry, will, we think, agree with us, that they were strongly calculated to lead astray a mind like Mr. Irving's. The latter was naturally constituted so as to be fascinated with the former's style of thought, but just in proportion to his admiration was the evil likely to ensue. It required considerable powers to understand, and still greater to relish Coleridge; but to rival him demanded powers equal to his own, and these Mr. Irving did not possess. The conversation of Coleridge encouraged, if it did not generate, that feverish restlessness in speculation, which was the rock on which Mr. Irving split. He admires the originality of Coleridge, but, in straining after it, he is frequently no more than odd. Following his master into the profound, he is for ever falling into the paradoxical. When the skilful hand of Coleridge managed to draw lines, the coarser instruments of his pupil only make blots. Failure, of course, was the inevitable result, and the stormy sensibility of the man, could not bear that failure tamely. His popularity declined, and he rushed with reckless impetuosity into every thing most opposite to the public mind upon which he had lost his hold. The boldness which had struck, rose into an arrogance which disgusted. The "prophecies" were considered unedifying; and, to mend the matter, he betook himself to the "tongues." Peculiarity degenerated into unsoundness. No opinion could be too extravagant for an imagination waxing desperate. He is as little fettered by a regard for consistency of opinion. Every thing, with him, is the result of impulse and position.

"We, we, Christians," he exclaims, in the *Oration*s, "have lost the manly regard of our fathers for liberty and good government, and crouched into slavish statements of passive obedience." Strange to say, however, he afterwards publishes a volume of sermons for the express purpose of inculcating the very passive obedience which he here denounces. How, then, is the change to be accounted for? Simply by the fact that when Mr. Irving composed the "*Oration*s," he was big with the hope of doing wonders in the conversion of the Radicals, and that when he wrote the "*Discourses upon Daniel's Vision*," the blasting of that hope had stung him to the quick. Many other instances might be given. But we must conclude.

Upon the whole, if the remarks which we have thrown together, shall induce any of our readers to think more kindly of the object of them, than they may have done before, we shall not regret it. That he mistook both his own powers and the times in which he lived is evident. But there is nothing mean or paltry in his vanity. He is as one born out of due season. He is sick of the sordid and the selfish world that surrounds him. He pines for the generous virtues and the hallowed spirit of the olden time, and willingly would he spend and be spent, to bring them back once more. His soul is away with the souls of Luther and of Knox. He is ambitious to think and act worthily of the lineage from which he is sprung. "I have in my veins," he says, "the blood of the persecuted Albigenes, who fled to Scotland and took up their refuge there,—three brothers of a family of which I am descended,—and I have about me some of their venerable tokens."* If this be glorying, let him be allowed to glory. Duplicity and meanness, of every description, were abhorrent from his free and manly nature. One who knew him well has stated, since his death, that "he was the most simple and true-hearted man that he had ever met." That he possessed devoted zeal, a spotless character, and a dauntless heart, might, with truth, be inscribed upon the tomb in which he sleeps. Qualities like these are surely worthy of respect:—

"And, if we mourn they could not save
From error, him who owns the grave,
Be every harsher thought suppressed
And sacred be the last long rest!"

LAICUS.

*Speech at the Continental Society.

HINTS FOR PREACHERS.*

Of all speakers the preacher is most frequently called upon to appear in public, and to address the largest portion of the community; and yet he, of all others, is peculiarly exempted from competition, contradiction and criticism. From these he is protected by the place from which he speaks, and the reverence due to his sacred function. This prerogative is a principal cause of the mediocrity chargeable upon pulpit eloquence. Few of this class so far excel their brethren as to be entitled to public panegyric, and the greater number are hardly deemed deserving of critical notice. It sometimes happens, however, that they are made the subject of eulogium or satire. Thus a writer in this periodical, who signs *Laicus*, has developed the character of Evangelical preaching in a very able and masterly manner; and I recollect to have seen, a few years ago, a spirited and apparently a candid review of the most distinguished preachers in the metropolis. The observations of this last writer, however, related, I think, chiefly to manner, delivery and style. It is not my intention to touch upon any of these points, but to throw out some suggestions, with respect to two parts of the subject, of more importance, and seldom, if ever, expressly submitted to the consideration of the public or the profession.

I. The generality of practical preachers are often accused of pitching the tone of their morality and piety too low, so as to encourage a lax morality, and a languid, formal devotion. They are thought to take the general character of society, or of their own congregations as a standard; and to be too cautious of disgusting either, by enforcing stricter rules of virtue, or a warmer spirit of piety than they are accustomed to. It is evident that such preachers can contribute little to the improvement of their people, and nothing to the reformation of the world. If they regulate their exhortations by the practice of their more exemplary hearers, they will either encourage a delusive self-sufficiency and spiritual pride, or lull them into a fatal security. If they take the conduct of their hearers, in general, for their rule, they will be so far from elevating the character of their people, that they will be the means of debasing it; for if men

* For Hints to Ministers and People, see vol. 4, p. 362; and for Hints to a Divinity Student, see vol. 5, p. 208.

have no incentive to grow better, they will assuredly grow worse. It is to be feared, that a preacher may sometimes take his own character as a criterion of excellence. In this case he will neither improve himself nor his people; he will be satisfied with his own proficiency, and they will think it quite enough to equal their pastor, and very presumptuous to attempt to excel him. This practice of taking a man's own character as a model on which to mould his instructions, will be followed by yet more injurious consequences. Should he, for instance, be addicted to any vicious or scandalous habits, or even conscious of a deficiency in temper and discretion, he will be so far from holding them up to public censure, that he will cautiously avoid any allusion to them; and will thus defraud his hearers of advice and exhortation on those very points of conduct, on which they most require to be admonished. It can hardly be expected, indeed, that the character of the minister of the gospel shall be free from every blemish; or that he shall make his faults and frailties the subject of public exposure, except, indeed, they be such foibles as do not materially affect his general character; and if a preacher were to keep aloof from these and other infirmities incident to human nature, he might, at once, abandon his office and profession. As to notorious and scandalous vices, he should not be discouraged or deterred from exposing them to reproach, by the prevalence of them among his people; but he should avoid such a pointed and characteristic description as would encourage any to apply it to their neighbours, or to suppose that he had any particular person in view.

It is said, by many, that they can derive no benefit from the sermons of a minister for whom they have no respect. But this is wrong. Good instruction and advice should be carefully received through what channel soever it may flow. We relish and are nourished by our food, without inquiring into the culinary process by which it is prepared. A man who has fallen into errors and sins, may be better qualified to give warning and advice than one unacquainted with the ways of the world. He may depict in more glowing colours, the temptations and disappointments—the vanity and misery of sinful gratifications. An immoral preacher has been compared to a burning glass: he may enlighten and inflame his audience, though insensible himself to the truths and

virtues which he recommends ; as the burning glass retains its original temperature, while it kindles and consumes whatever is exposed to its focus. When a minister declaims against the foibles and infirmities to which the generality of men are subject, he should not assume the air and language of one who is exempt from them himself, but rather address his auditory as a man of like passions with themselves ; as one anxious to improve himself as well as them. In this way he will conciliate their sympathy, while he acknowledges his frailty, instead of rousing those indignant feelings excited by the dictatorial reprehension of a man no better than themselves ; and will gain the reputation of modesty and diffidence, instead of arrogance and self-sufficiency. Such a pastor may, without any loss of dignity, and even with some increase of affection and esteem, address his flock in such words as these ;—“ If ever I address you as if I seemed to make any distinction between you and myself, I hope you will have the candour to ascribe it to inadvertence ; and that you will not conceive me guilty of such Pharisaical arrogance as to think myself righteous and to despise others. I always conceive myself preaching to myself as well as to you ; and never address you with more earnestness, than when I feel with the deepest humiliation the necessity of making an impression on my own heart.”

II. Another class of sacred orators may be censured for fixing the standard of moral principle and devotional feeling too high. They soar so high above the convictions and practice of their auditory, as to make them despair of attaining to any degree of excellence that will recommend them to the favour or mercy of God. During the extravagant declamation of one of these on the disinterested love of God and an ardent affection for the Saviour,—purity of life and enthusiastic devotion, some will be charmed with his eloquence, others may be alarmed by the severity of his doctrine, or thrown into despair by his denunciations of divine wrath ; but when they leave the portals of the church, these apprehensions will quickly vanish, and they will begin to ask one another,—“ What kind of a man is this who demands such rigorous qualifications for divine acceptance ? Is he himself distinguished for such sublime and spiritual devotion, or such angelic purity of life as he requires from others ; or is all his eloquence only a tinkling cymbal ?

Such declamation might well become Massillon and Fenelon, and may indeed have been imitated or copied from them; but these eloquent men led devout, recluse and mortified lives, practised greater severities themselves than they enjoined upon others, and preached to expecting and admiring multitudes impressed with deep veneration for their saintly characters. This gentleman, on the contrary, we see every day bustling through the crowd, solicitous about his worldly affairs, paying court to his patron, and curious about the news and politics of the day. We meet him in convivial parties, where he takes his glass and cracks his joke like other men; and at midnight assemblies, partaking of the fashionable amusements among the gayest of the gay; and a few hours after, he mounts the pulpit and assumes the language of a saint and the office of a public censor."

This fault is not peculiar to the professed orator, or ostentatious declaimer. Some ministers of more moderate powers and pretensions, sometimes run into the same error. This I consider as the relics of puerility. When a young man begins to write sermons, he is disposed to say every thing that comes into his mind. If he happens to broach a good topic, he runs it to the dregs. Now, if I hear a minister of longer standing indulging in such excesses, I suspect that he either retains some portion of this puerile taste, or that he finds it convenient to revive some of his juvenile discourses. This faulty habit is apt, sometimes, to shew itself on the most unseasonable occasions, particularly at the sacramental solemnities, especially among Presbyterians. They have a practice among them of "Fencing the Tables:" which consists in enforcing the most rigorous qualifications for worthy communion, and stern admonitions to the unworthy communicant not to approach the table. Here the error of which we are speaking cannot be said to be entirely out of place; but I have sometimes heard these menacing harangues introduced when the communicants were already seated, and when it was impossible for them to withdraw. Thus the young communicant is taken by surprise, and thrown into despair by the horrible denunciations of damnation, which he might have averted had he been forewarned.

Among the points upon which these preachers are apt to run into excess, some are of a practical nature; and of these, family worship is one. This is a most inter-

esting and edifying exercise. It has a tendency to confirm the mutual confidence and affection of all the members of the household, to add authority and dignity to the head of the family, to strengthen the integrity and fidelity of his servants, and to combine the junior members in a bond of sympathetic union. The observance, therefore, of this practice should be recommended by the mildest and most persuasive eloquence; for it is a voluntary and discretionary duty, not imposed by any express command in the Gospel; nor is it one that can be practised in all circumstances. In some rural districts indeed, the pastor may expect his flock to pay particular attention to it; but any man at all acquainted with the state of society must know, that in many cases the enforcing of it is neither practicable nor indeed desirable. He must know that a large majority of the heads of families are disqualified by nature and education from presiding on such occasions with solemnity and decorum. He must be aware of the disunion that too frequently prevails in families, the servants holding the religion of their masters in abhorrence, and being at the same time at variance among themselves. He must reflect with yet greater regret that the parents and children cannot walk to the same house of the Lord in company; and that the children themselves will not associate in domestic devotion. Some of the family will therefore absent themselves altogether; others will give only a late and irregular attendance. These causes will occasion frequent interruptions with much mortification and chagrin to the master of the house and be followed by chiding and murmuring between him and his children. When such cases occur, it is surely better that the practice should be discontinued. It is evident that still greater obstacles will arise in populous cities and commercial or manufacturing towns. In these the necessary avocations of the individuals, the social and friendly intercourse of families, and the innocent recreations of the young, can hardly be expected to give way to family prayer. However these interruptions may be regretted by the minister, he must be convinced that they will very generally take place. He may use his influence to correct them in particular cases, but it is downright folly to expect that they will all yield to his denunciations from the pulpit; and it is worse than folly to stigmatize many of the most respectable members of

his congregation as graceless and *prayerless* men, little entitled to the character of Christians. When a minister indulges in language so indiscreet and offensive, I cannot but suspect that his aim is to besprinkle his own name with the odour of sanctity.

On the whole, it is more desirable and more agreeable to Scripture, that every member should offer up his morning and evening prayer at his bedside ; or enter into his closet, shut the door, and pray to his Father in secret. This pious and scriptural practice is incompatible, I fear, with the daily practice of family devotion, and is in danger of being supplanted by it ; so that young persons will grow up without the habit or faculty of personal prayer.

III. Doctrinal preachers are yet more liable to this charge, than the advocates of morality and piety. Their young men have indeed a standard ; but it is one which they neither believe nor even understand. It is, however, the high-road to popularity, in which they rapidly advance till they exaggerate and caricature its doctrines. Senior ministers would often gladly moderate this standard, but they are compelled to proceed in the same path, lest they should be overtaken and supplanted by these youthful ranters.

We might at least expect, that these young men would not inculcate upon others what they do not believe themselves ; and that, if their faith be not fully confirmed, they would express their opinions with modesty and diffidence ; but instead of tempering the vehemence of their zeal, by reflecting on the faintness of their belief, they study to cloak their unbelief, with the vehemence of their zeal.

This spirit of vain-glory, and this keen competition for popularity and power, with a passion for Pharisaical proselytism, are principal causes of the melancholy and deplorable condition of religion and religious society in these nations. Rival churches are at open war : subordinate sects speak of each other with rancour and contempt ; congregations glory in mutual proselytism : among private families the bonds of amity, hospitality, and even civility, are torn asunder : yea, individual members of the same household are every where fulfilling the sorrowful prediction of our Lord. In short, party spirit has superseded the spirit of devotion, and faith has turned charity out of doors.

I have long indulged an idea, but not a hope, that these evils might be assuaged, if not on a general scale, yet in more enlightened sects, or at least in some particular congregations, by returning to the practice of former times. Let every minister inculcate his own views of the Gospel, without reference to any existing controversy, without even intimating that any controversies exist in the Christian world, without any allusion to the sentiments of any other congregation, or to any expressions that may have fallen from their minister; so that his people shall never hear any thing but his own view of Gospel truth, delivered with simplicity and candour, sincerity and freedom. This practice would not preclude the people from suggesting in conversation any doubts or scruples, that may have arisen in their minds, or asking his opinion upon any subject connected with religion. It would therefore set no bar to the investigation of truth. On the contrary, I am persuaded, that the cause of truth would be more effectually promoted than at present. The people would be likely to acquire more correct knowledge and truer sentiments of religion, by private study and calm meditation, than by hearing controversial discourses; for these must necessarily be partial, strongly tinged with the prejudices of the preacher, and generally calculated to excite uncharitable feelings towards their brethren. The young would grow to maturity without having heard from the pulpit such words as Papist and Protestant, Trinitarian, Arian or Socinian; and when they first came to hear the doctrines of Calvinism, they would hear them with surprise and disgust. I am persuaded that many, not to say most, congregations would come round to the sentiments of a pious pastor, if their prejudices were not too roughly handled.

There are many persons still living, who may remember that this temper once prevailed in a good degree among the Irish Presbyterians, and the English Unitarians. "Then had the churches rest and were edified." The pastors enjoyed comfort and satisfaction in the exercise of their ministry. The flocks had confidence in their shepherds, and lived together in "godly quiet." Ministers resorted with pleasure to their professional and social meetings, and united in ministerial communion; while congregations esteemed each other's ministers "very highly in love for their works' sake," and lived in peace with each other, and intermingled freely in communion.

My recollection of those times has been revived and agreeably refreshed by a letter of Dr. Bostock's inserted in the "*Christian Reformer*," vol. i. p. 176: with some extracts from which I shall close this article, leaving the reader to make his own observations on the parallel between the Irish Presbyterians and the English Dissenters, within the last fifty years.

"I am old enough to recollect distinctly what was the nature and condition of the Presbyterian Dissenting Societies between 30 and 40 years ago, and I have not been an inattentive observer of the progress which they have gone through during this period. At the time to which I refer, the societies professed to be, and actually were, formed upon the principle of not admitting of any restriction, real or implied, on the freedom of inquiry on matters of religious belief; this was their sole bond of union, this was their sole creed. It was a broad and intelligible basis on which to found a project for union and co-operation; although persons might form very different opinions respecting the principle in question, or respecting its importance, or the length to which it should be carried, still it could not be misunderstood. No doctrinal creed was imposed, none was implied; and at the same time that the members of these societies were always urged to search the Scriptures and to read all kinds of books which might throw any light upon them, yet there was comparatively little anxiety manifested respecting the conclusions which were formed. As a matter of fact, it is probable that the majority of the most enlightened members were, at this period, Arians; a certain number were, what was then termed "Socinians;" and not a few Trinitarians. But, whatever was the result, it scarcely affected the harmony or the unity of the body. Reflecting persons were aware that subjects of such intricacy were topics which few could fully comprehend, and which were of little practical importance, and were in fact very remotely connected with the great principles of morality, which it is the business of religion to illustrate and enforce.

"But an unfortunate change now took place. Causes, in some measure depending upon the state of the times, and, in some degree, upon the character of certain eminent individuals, led to various polemical discussions. These produced their ordinary effect, of exasperating the feelings of those immediately engaged in them, and

inducing them to magnify the importance of topics on which they had bestowed so much attention. As the contest proceeded, the passions and feelings were still more called into action; numerous individuals became eager to enter the lists as combatants, or at least as partizans; and thus, by the usual process, the calm voice of truth was drowned in the clamour of controversy, and the spirit of cool deliberation was converted into the feelings, either of confident triumph or of sullen disappointment.

“The effect need scarcely be pointed out; the advocates for free inquiry now became the advocates for certain opinions; societies were formed, not to discover the truth, but to propagate these opinions; books were written, not to investigate the difficulties which attended the questions in discussion, or to throw additional light upon them; but, assuming the truth to be unequivocally discovered, to enforce certain tenets and to make converts to them. The dispassionate inquirer after truth retired in disgust, or was overwhelmed in the tumult of controversy; and hence a body of men whose professed object was to promote free inquiry, virtually bound themselves to a certain set of opinions, and having pledged themselves to support a certain doctrinal creed, commenced a zealous career of proselytism.

“And what was the result of this change on the character and conduct of ministers? Congregations were no longer anxious for men of education, but for men who believed certain doctrines. Their flocks did not wish for instruction; they wished for the gratification of having their favourite opinions enforced, of being told that they alone were in possession of the true faith, and that every one else was ignorant and uninformed.

“Now, what has been the result of the proselytizing scheme upon the body at large? It has called forth similar efforts in other sects, and has brought into action a system of rivalry, in which the Presbyterian Dissenters, with all their efforts, will find it impossible to cope with their antagonists.—They still retain too much of their original spirit, to descend to all the means employed by their adversaries.”

NEMO.

ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF DEATH.

(Continued from p. 80.)

THE dread which is felt of this event has manifested itself in many popular impressions of the most erroneous and indefensible, as well as painful, character.

We call death 'the king of terrors,' and in the conceptions of the body of mankind, it is clothed with every terrific attribute. In the excess of fear, their imagination bodies it forth as an actual being. They speak of a person 'struck with death,' as if there were some dread power that ruled over the last hour of mortal existence. Even this popular phraseology, tho' it may scarcely be thought to indicate any error to which reflecting minds are liable, is not unworthy of a moment's attention, in connexion with the errors that are prevailing on this subject. Death is the gradual exhaustion of our faculties, the sinking away of the powers of animal life, till they finally cease to act, and to be. Now, this process may be hastened or retarded; may have its progress and its different stages; one power after another may yield—the faculty of speech, of hearing, of motion; but, to fix on one particular moment rather than another, and to say that *now* the deceased person is 'struck with death,' is to use language without any foundation in philosophy, or support from observation. There is no power—there may be precursors, indeed, which the experienced may descry with greater or less certainty—but there is no power, that at any one moment, strikes a fatal blow; that fastens a hold upon its victim from which it may not be shaken; that sets its mark upon the diseased frame, as it were the mark of destiny: but, 'while there is life, there is hope,' and from any state of exhaustion the sinking faculties may rise to a briefer or a longer continuance of life. It is not, in fine, by some mysterious harbinger, that death announces its coming. All decay is but dying; all disease is a progress towards death; every beating pulse is wearing away the channels of life; every breath of that heaving bosom is preparing for the time when it shall breathe no more.

There prevails also an erroneous or an exaggerated idea of many of the circumstances that attend the dying hour.

In particular, it is thought that this final event passes with some dreadful visitation of unknown agony over

the departing sufferer. It is imagined that there is some strange and mysterious reluctance in the spirit to leave the body; that it struggles long to retain its hold, and is, at last, torn with violence from its mortal tenement; and, in fine, that this conflict between the soul and the body, greatly adds to the pangs of dissolution. But it may be justly presumed from what usually appears, that there is no particular nor acute suffering; not more than is often experienced in life; nay, rather, that there is less, because the very powers of suffering are enfeebled, the very capacities of pain are nearly exhausted. Death is to be regarded, rather as a sleep than an acute sensation, as a suspension rather than a conflict of our faculties. Our Saviour once said in relation to this event, 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.' The martyr Stephen, we are told 'fell asleep,' though he died amidst the blows and shouts of murderers. And the scripture denominates the pious dead, 'those who sleep in Jesus.' Death is the sleep of the weary. It is repose, the body's repose, after the busy and toilsome day of life.

We have all witnessed, perhaps, the progress of this change; and what was it? Let our senses and our understanding answer; and not our imagination. What was it, but gradually diminishing strength, feeble utterance, failing perception, and total insensibility? The change, as it passed before us, may have been attended with accidental circumstances of mental experience or bodily sensation; but the change itself, death considered as an event, was only a gradual decline and extinction of the powers of life. This is all which we saw or could know, as necessarily belonging to this crisis in the progress of our being. And yet, from this ignorance, we allow ourselves to be troubled by the phantoms of agitating conjecture. We imagine, and indeed it is common to say, that because 'no one has returned to tell us what it is to die,' there must be some mysterious and peculiar sensation, some awful physical experience attending it. But we see nothing, we see indications of nothing, and we ought not to presume anything, of this nature.

Neither are we to presume, that death arouses the mind, in the last moments of its earthly existence, to the keenest attention, or to the most intense action of its powers. The subject, when distinctly contemplated beforehand, may do so; it may often do so, in the midst

of life; and well were it, if it far more frequently aroused us to do, in season, the work of life. All we wish to say, is—and we wish to say it to preclude all appeals, at once, to mysterious fear and unfounded hope—that there is no peculiar, no fearful nor hopeful activity of mind amidst the solemnities of dissolution; that, in most cases, there is no activity. It is probable, that the exhausted faculties usually sink to their mortal repose, as they do to nightly sleep; and that the convulsive struggles which are sometimes witnessed, are often as unconscious, as those with which we sink to the slumbers of evening rest.

Nor, when the veil of delirium is spread over the mortal hour, can we regard it as the evil that it is often thought to be. It has seemed to us rather, in many cases, as a friendly veil, drawn by the hand of nature over what would otherwise be the agonies of separation, over the anguish that the parent would feel at leaving children orphans and destitute, or that the friend would feel, in saying farewell, to those who were dearest upon earth. Delirium often interposes, we believe, by the kind providence of God, where nature would be too weak, or faith too infirm for the trial.

Nor yet is there anything but fancy in what is sometimes said of the loneliness of the last hour. To the selfish and the bad, and in proportion as they possess this character, there is, indeed, solitude in death, and it may then be doubly felt. But to them, there is solitude also in life; solitude in the chamber of sickness, in the hour of retired meditation, nay, and it is oftentimes deeply felt in the throng of society. If we deserve to have friends, they are with us in death, as truly as in life; so long as we are conscious of anything earthly, we are conscious of their presence. It may sustain and soothe us, till the last moment of our stay on earth. ‘I walked with her,’—said one who laid down the remains of a beloved companion in a distant land—‘I walked with her down the valley of shadows; I wiped the cold damps of death from her forehead; and saw her ascend to the mansions of the blessed!’

But we must hasten briefly to consider some of the errors, that relate, not to the mode or circumstances, but to the nature, the essential character of this solemn event.

When our Saviour says, ‘He that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die,’ he adds, ‘believest thou this?’ The question might still be put to multitudes even in

a christian land, and we doubt not, with the strongest implication of their unbelief. They do not believe it. Death is regarded as the extinction, rather than as the continuance of being. Whatever the words of our theology may say, the real impression upon most minds is, that death sunders almost all the ties that united us to our former existence ; that it changes not only our state, but our nature ; that the soul, as it travels to the ' undiscovered country,' is passing beyond the borders of all that it has known, and sought, and valued. We are apt to feel, as if on the passage from life, we parted with all that our thoughts had familiarized and our affections cherished. But is not this an error ? We take with us—so to speak—our thinking and conscious selves ; and it is no vanity, but a simple truth, to say, in a very important sense, that ourself is our all ; for it embraces all our mental acquisitions and attachments, our joys and hopes, our attainments of piety, our treasures of knowledge, all elevated and holy contemplations that we may have indulged in, all our habits of thought and feeling that are estimable and pure, all that is precious in happiness, all that is sacred in memory ; and the record of all this, death will not erase, but will only impress upon it the seal of perpetuity. It has not erased these things, we may believe, from the venerated and pious minds that have gone before us. The dead, the departed, should we rather say, are connected with us by more than the ties of memory. The love that on earth yearned towards us, is not dead ; the kindness that gladdened us is not dead ; the sympathy that bound itself with our fortunes is not dead, nor has it lost its fervor, surely, in the pity of an angel. No ; if our christian guides speak truly, it still yearns towards us, it would still gladden us. It still melts in tenderness over our sorrows. The world of spirits—we know not where it is, whether far or near ; but it may as well, for all that we can understand, be near to us, as far distant ; and in that fervent love, which knows nothing of change or distance or distinction, it is for ever near us. Our friend, if he be the same and not another being—our friend in whatever world, in whatever sphere, is still our friend. The ties of every virtuous union, are, like the virtue which cements them, like the affections of angels, like the love of God which binds them to the eternal throne, immortal.

The evil of making this wide separation, this violent disruption of the present from the future, as well as of other prevailing views of death, is in many ways great. Our thoughts do not easily pass to live in the future, or to draw from it the motives of action. Our theological views of this subject, our contemplations of futurity, are too much like the ancient poetic dreams of an elysian land and a tartarean region, visionary and ineffectual. There is a fearful retribution, there is a sublime beatitude, we admit; but our conceptions of both are vague and unreal; and our fear does not deter us from sin, and our hope does not allure us to purity and heaven. Between us and our future recompense we look upon death as 'a great gulf fixed,' and it cuts off the communication of our thoughts. Between the good and the bad, a great gulf is fixed, indeed; not between us and the departed. Death is not that gulf; yet we so regard it. We do not sufficiently consider it as a stage, a necessary stage in the progress of being; as a natural passage from the childhood to the maturity of our existence. We are deterred, too, from the thoughts of futurity, by the imaginary glooms and mysteries of the entrance to it. Even the most attractive ideas of a future life, even a spiritual relish for its joys, and a conscience free from alarms, could scarcely overcome our reluctance to so fearful and dismal an approach to it. We could hardly think of home, or welcome the prospect of admission there, if we must pass to it through unknown conflicts and woes, if we could reach it only by braving the horrors of shipwreck, if we could gain its threshold only by rushing over the burning ruins of a conflagration.

(To be Continued.)

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 62.)

CHAPTER VIII.

V. 2. And behold there came a leper, and worshipped him, [bowed down before him] saying, Lord, if thou wilt, [willest] thou canst make me clean.

Leprosy was a contagious and loathsome disease. The leper was legally unclean. Lev. xiii. 44, 45. Numb. v. 2, 5.

V. 4. And Jesus saith unto him: See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and

offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

He did not wish to excite popular applause, but to lodge an authentic testimony with the priest. For the gift commanded by Moses, see Lev. xiv. 3, 4, 10.

V. 5. And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him.

A Centurion was a Roman officer commanding a company of a hundred men; and consequently, a Gentile.

V. 9. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

For though I am a subaltern officer, under the command of another, I have only to utter a word, and my command will be executed at any distance.

V. 11, 12. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west; and shall sit down, [shall recline at table] with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the children [Gr. sons, that is, heirs] of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The admission of the Gentiles into the kingdom of the Messiah, and the rejection of the Jews are here foretold. The kingdom of heaven is represented under the image of a feast; of which the Easterns partook, reclining on couches. Luke xiv. 15. Matt. xxii. 1—4. Rev. xix. 9.

The Jews would not eat with the Gentiles. A great privilege is here promised figuratively.

"The outer darkness," in opposition to the illuminated guest-chamber.

The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" represent the grief and lamentations of those who were shut out.

V. 14. And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

Hence it appears that Peter was married; as was also John and perhaps Paul and other apostles: See 1 Cor. ix. 5; where it appears that Peter's wife was alive after he was an apostle.

V. 17. Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

"The general sense of the prophet Isaiah is, that Christ by his sufferings, took away the causes of sorrow to which mankind would otherwise have been subject, not that he took them on himself. liii. 4. In like manner, says the Evangelist, Christ took away their bodily evils by his miraculous power. 1 Pet. ii. 24. refers to Isaiah liii. 12." Primate Newcome. It cannot mean that he took their diseases on himself, for this is not true.

V. 22. Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.

Let the spiritually dead perform the office of burying those who are naturally dead. At present your duty to preach the gospel supercedes all other duties.

It does not appear whether his father was yet dead.

V. 28. And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes.

Gergesenes the people of Gergesa, or according to Luke, Gadarenes, the people of Gadara. These were contiguous districts on the east side of the sea of Galilee. This incident may have taken place on the borders.

V. 28. There met him two possessed with devils [demons] coming out of the tombs exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way, &c.

The particular species of insanity under which these men laboured, agrees with what the ancient physicians called *Lycanthropia*, and is described by Oribasius. "Those who are affected with it," he observes, "wander by night like wolves in solitary places, and among the monuments of the dead; during the day-time they often return, and abide quietly at home. Their feet and legs are severely wounded by running over stones, rocks, and brakes. They are usually pale; their mouth is parched; their eyes are dry, dull, and hollow."

It is not strange that these maniacs should think themselves possessed with demons, when it is considered that many insane persons indulge the same ideas among us at present. Rosenmuller knew a woman, who constantly persisted in saying that she was an evil demon. These men, therefore, spoke and acted agreeably to their persuasions. Considering themselves as unclean spirits, they could not choose a more suitable dwelling, after quitting the tombs, than the bodies of swine.

The transmission of the disease was an act of divine power, somewhat similar to that by which the leprosy of Naaman was transferred to Gehazi. The destruction of the swine, which from their great number (2000) appear to have belonged to several proprietors, was calculated to impress the promiscuous crowds of Jews, Gentiles, and idolators residing in the neighbourhood, with a proper sense of Christ's divine power, and to punish a practice contrary to the law of Moses, namely, the breeding of swine for food.

Some are of opinion that the swine were driven over the precipice into the sea by the maniacs. That horses, sheep, hogs, and other gregarious animals, are often seized with a sudden panic, and will rush on whither the foremost may lead them, is a well known fact. "I myself," says Dr. Sykes, "met with a woman who told me of *numbers of devils* in her; and, consistent with that principle, she told me what *this* or *that* particular devil said, and what they desired to be done; and she asked me, if I did not *hear* or *see* the devils."

V. 29. Jesus thou son of God.

That *the Son of God* and *the Christ* were equivalent terms, see Luke, xxii. 67. 70. The maniacs may have learned this from common report.

V. 29. Art thou come hither to torment us before the time ?

These men imagining themselves possessed of demons, spoke here and v. 31, agreeably to their own wild conceptions and persuasions.

CHAPTER IX.

V. 1. And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

This was Capernaum where Christ chiefly dwelt, and paid tribute as an inhabitant. See Matt. xvii. 24.

V. 3. This man blasphemeth [speaketh profanely.]

V. 5. For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk ?

Whether—which of the two is easier. If I can cure his disease I may forgive his sins ; for they are equally acts of supernatural power. He accordingly desired the sick man to take up the pallet on which he lay, and depart.

V. 9. And as Jesus passed from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom.

The scene of this transaction was Capernaum; where Jesus had taught, and worked miracles for some time. Matthew, therefore, could not but have previously known his character, doctrine and mighty works.

Capernaum was a port on the lake of Gennesareth, and it was the business of Matthew to take toll of those who crossed the lake.

V. 13. I will have mercy, and not [rather than] sacrifice.

This is a common idiom very necessary to be attended to.

V. 15. Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them ? &c.

It would be as unseasonable for my disciples to mourn and fast while enjoying my society, as it would be for the attendants on a bridegroom to mourn at his nuptials. It will be time enough for both to mourn when deprived of our company.

V. 16. 17. No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment ; for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles [skins] ; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish ; but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

It is no more fit to enjoin rigorous discipline on my new converts, than to patch an old thread bare garment with a piece of strong new cloth, which would soon part from the old, and by tearing part of it away, would enlarge the holes; or, to pour new wine, in a state of fermentation, into old leathern bottles, which would burst, and occasion the loss of both.

V. 20. And behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment.

She came behind him, through modesty or fear, lest she should be repelled by the people, being legally unclean. Lev. xv. 25.

V. 23. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels [musicians] and the people making a noise.

In every village where there was a synagogue, ten men were constantly obliged to attend public worship; of whom three were called "rulers."

The people of the East used to hire persons of both sexes to bewail the dead with doleful songs; and these were accompanied with music, particularly of flutes. *Gen. 30. 17*

V. 24. He said unto them, Give place; for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth.

This he may have said from a desire to mitigate their sorrow; or perhaps from the unwillingness, which he testified on some occasions, to have his benevolent miracles published, as in the case of the two blind men. v. 30.

V. 27. And when Jesus departed [Gr. was departing or passing] thence.

V. 32. And as they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil [demon.]

His loss of speech was attributed by the people to the influence of an evil spirit. He may also have been an idiot.

V. 34. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

This was Beelzebub, a Philistine idol, supposed to have evil spirits under his command.

CHAPTER X.

Ver. 2. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these, &c.

Apostle is the same with missionary.

Lebbeus or Thaddeus was also called Judas, the son of James. Matthew, called also Levi. Simon the Canaanite, called also Zelotes, from his zealous disposition. Judas Iscariot, a man of Kerioth.

The apostles are probably placed two and two, as they were sent. See Mark vi. 7.

V. 5, 6. Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not : but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

During the life of Christ the Gospel was chiefly confined to the Jews. The harvest among them was sufficiently great. A connection with the Gentiles or Samaritans would have excited premature alarm and hostility. The command, however, is not absolute ; the original means, *turn not aside into the way* ; and the word "rather" shows the same thing. When our Lord says, Matt. xv. 24, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" the meaning is, I am principally sent to them. This is a common Hebrew idiom, *od man le'asot et ha'be'er le'asot et ha'ayot*.

V. 8. Raise the dead, cast out devils, [demons] ; freely [gratuitously] ye have received, freely give.

It does not appear that they ever exercised this power of raising the dead, and some question the authenticity of the words ; but Griesbach retains them.

V. 9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, &c. scrip, [wallet ;] neither shoes, [two pair of shoes ;] meat, [food.]

V. 11. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence.

Inquire for some well-disposed family, and remain with them till you leave the town. "Go not from house to house" in quest of entertainment.

V. 12, 13. And when you come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it ; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

And when you enter the house, greet it with the ordinary salutation, i. e. "Salem," "Peace be to this house !" If the family be worthy, your good wishes will come upon them ; if not, they will redound to your own benefit ; or be ineffectual, as if they had never been conceived or uttered.

V. 14. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words ; when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

By this significant action testifying that you have freely offered them the blessings of the Gospel, and that they have rejected them.

V. 15. Verily, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

"Than for that city," which will witness such miracles, and hear such instruction as would have converted Sodom and Gomorrah. See Matt. xi. 23, 24.

V. 18. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

You will be persecuted by the Jews in the Synagogue and the Sanhedrim; and by the Romans, before the governors and kings of Judea.

"For a testimony." That your testimony to the truth of the Gospel may be given before them.

V. 23. But when they persecute you in one city, flee to another; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the son of man be come.

Do not court persecution either from contention or vainglory.

Ye shall not have preached the gospel throughout all the cities of Israel, before I come to destroy the Jewish state by the Romans.

V. 26. Fear them not therefore; for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, &c.

Fear them not; for in spite of them my doctrine shall be preached openly and boldly. v. 26, 27. All your adversaries can only kill the body, v. 28. And God's providence presides over you. v. 29, 30, 31.

V. 27. What ye hear in the ear, that preach [Gr. proclaim], ye upon the house tops.

The houses in Judea were low and had flat roofs with battlements. Deut. xxii. 8. Acts x. 9; from which proclamations were often made.

V. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

This probably alludes to the sparrows, and other small birds, which were sold in the temple-courts, for the purpose of sacrifice. See Lev. xiv. 49. The farthing was the Roman *as*, or the tenth part of the *denarius*, and worth about three farthings of our money. One farthing might buy two sparrows, and two farthings five. See Luke xii. 6.

V. 30. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

A strong proverbial manner of expressing God's providential care. See 2 Sam. xiv. 11, and Acts xxvii. 34.

V. 34, 35. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword, &c.

Our Lord expresses not the design or tendency, but the event or consequence of his coming.

V. 38. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

This is an allusion to the custom of the Romans, who obliged criminals to bear the crosses, on which they were to suffer, to the place of execution.

V. 39. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

He who gaineth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall gain it.

"Gaineth," seeketh to preserve it by deserting his duty.

"Shall lose it," in the future world.

"Shall gain it," at the day of judgment.—*Newcome*.

Ver. 40. He that receiveth you receiveth me [or my doctrine], and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

Every favour done you I shall acknowledge as done to myself, and every mark of respect to me, God will accept as done to him.

V. 41. He that receiveth [or entertaineth] a prophet in the name of [or as] a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward. [shall be rewarded accordingly].

The word *prophet* was used in a very lax and indefinite sense, in the time of our translators. It also occurs in various senses in the Greek, particularly in the Epistles. See 1 Cor. xiv.

CHAPTER XI.

V. 6. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Blessed is he whom neither the meanness of my condition, the opposition of the Jews, nor the fear of reproach and persecution, shall discourage from embracing my religion.

V. 12. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

The spirits of men are so raised and animated, by the preaching of John, with a desire after the kingdom of heaven, that it is, as it were, attacked with violence like a besieged city, and every man presses to get into it.

V. 13, 14. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.

For Moses and the ancient prophets only foresaw my coming from a distance; but he has announced it: as was foretold by Malachi, iv. 5. "Behold I will send you Elijah," or Elias, &c.

V. 16. It is like unto children, &c.

Thus you act like froward children whom nothing can please.

V. 19. But wisdom is justified of her children.

But my doctrine is justified by the conduct of my true followers.

V. 20. Wherein most of his mighty works were done.

Hence it appears, that "most of his mighty works" are not recorded, agreeably to John xxi. 25.

V. 21. Woe unto thee, &c.

"Woe unto thee," or Alas for thee! See Matt. xxiv. 19.

V. 23. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven [by wealth and pride] shalt be brought down to hell [to the grave].

The word translated *hell* is different from Gehenna, which is commonly used. It signifies *the invisible world, or the state of the dead*; and is used here for utter ruin and desolation.

V. 24. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

Because they would have repented, like Tyre and Sydon, v. 22, had they been witnesses to the preaching and miracles of Christ, which you have witnessed.

V. 25. At that time Jesus answered and said:

The Greek and the corresponding Hebrew words for "answered" signify "taking occasion to say, taking up the discourse and saying, or speaking suitably to a case, occasion, or affair, that is in agitation or in thought." Deut. xxi. 7, xxvi. 5, xxvii. 14, Job iii. 2. Cant. ii. 10. Matt. xvii. 4. xxii. 1, &c.

V. 25. I thank [or praise] thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

That though thou hast withheld these things from men of repute for wisdom and learning, such as the Scribes and Pharisees, yet thou hast made them known and received by such inconsiderable and uneducated, but upright and sincere men as my disciples. See Matt. xviii. 3.

V. 26. Even so, Father, &c.

Yea, I praise thee, for this is all agreeable to thy good pleasure.

V. 27. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

"All things," all power and knowledge.

"No man knoweth [the nature of] the Son but the Father." This assertion, which is repeated, Luke x. 22, and Rev. xix. 12, 13, should teach us great reverence when we speak on so high a subject as the nature of the son. Instead of "no man" and "any man" in this verse, it should have been "no one" and "any one;" or "man" should have been printed in Italics, as not being in the original. This observation applies to several other passages in the New Testament.

All those countries will be found extremely defective in the knowledge of the Supreme God, which have not received the Christian Revelation.

V. 28. Come unto me, all ye that labour, &c.

This is an inference from what was said in the foregoing verse. "Come, therefore, &c." "Heavy laden," with the observance of Jewish rites and traditions; or with the cares and troubles of this life.

V. 29. Take my yoke upon you, &c.

Submit to my doctrine and rule of life; and you will enjoy peace and tranquillity of mind.

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

WE always distrusted the motives of the reverend orators who were most loud and clamorous in vituperation against the Commissioners for National Education, and against the system of instruction sanctioned and pursued in their schools. We never entertained the slightest doubt that the whole opposition to the system was a political manœuvre, intended to embarrass the then existing Government, and to facilitate the return of their antagonists to power. We always thought that the leading actors in the farce, cared very little for the subject about which they made so loud an outcry; and would be very easily satisfied as to this particular measure, if the object which they had in view, viz—the removal of the late ministry, could be effected. The event has justified our suspicions; or rather turned our conjectures into certainty. The Whigs have been displaced and the Tories recalled to power. The Duke of Wellington, in the House of Lords, and Sir H. Hardinge, in the House of Commons, have officially declared, as ministers of the Crown, that the present Government will maintain the system of National Education, established in Ireland, under the auspices of their predecessors; and that they will even extend and increase its efficiency by placing a larger sum at the disposal of the Commissioners, than has been granted in previous years. How has this announcement been received, by those who would fain be thought exclusively zealous for the circulation of the unmutilated scriptures? Has Lord Roden again called upon the Protestants to form "*Gun-clubs*," for the defence of the Bible? Has Dr. Cooke resumed the preaching of political discourses, denouncing the Board, and

intimating the resignation of "*his dear friend*" Mr. Carlile? Has Mr. John Brown commenced that "*furious agitation*" with which he threatened Lord Grey? Has Mr. Morgan come forward, pathetically to implore the Government to "*leave us alone!*" Oh no! Times are changed. The former ministry are out of power; and there will be no more talk of agitation. Whatever may have induced the present administration to adopt the National Board—whether a conviction of its merits; or a desire to conciliate Lord Stanley, (whom Dr. Cooke once called a pettifogger,)—the fact is plain that the measure has been adopted; and the mouths of its late opponents are close shut. The roaring rampant lions of politico-religious agitation, are henceforth transformed into dumb dogs that cannot bark;—*or will not!*

Will this manifest exposure of the imposition which has been practised by the leading opponents of the National System, open the eyes of their dupes, and enable them to discern the real character of their measures? We fear not. Public spirit is at a low ebb in the *religious* world, as it is called. Servile principles are too prevalent, to admit the hope that any man will be found bold enough to unmask the pretenders. Bigotry and intolerance are strong enough there to protect the criminal and to screen the crime. We hope nothing, therefore, from the religious world. The public, at large, did not require this additional fact to shew them the character of the persons to whom we allude.

REVIEW.

1. *Christianity and Church of Irelandism: a Sermon, preached at Glasgow, Sunday, January 25, 1835, in consequence of the Massacre at Rathcormac.* By GEORGE HARRIS. 10th Edition, 12mo. pp. 24.
2. *Letters to the Presbyterians of Ulster, on Tithes, Regium Donum, and the Abuses of the Church Establishment.* By a Member of the Synod of Ulster. Belfast, Tate. pp. 28, 12mo.

WE assume as a point beyond dispute, that the New Testament lends no sanction to the institution of church establishments. Christ himself preached in opposition to the wishes of the Jewish hierarchy. His apostles confronted all the religious polities of their day. The doctrine which he asserted in the near prospect of death was, that "*his kingdom was not of this world.*"

But his followers have not been careful to imitate his example, or to act up to his principle. Wherever they have had the power, they have, in almost every age, shown a willingness to convert the church of Christ into an engine of state authority. They have rendered the profession of their own form of religion necessary to the enjoyment of civil privileges. They have surrounded it with temporal sanctions. They have guarded it by the exclusive possession of important immunities. They have decreed that those who dissent from its doctrines, shall nevertheless be obliged to contribute to its support. And they have entailed various penalties, some more and some less severe, on those who refuse compliance with its forms.

The consequences of this departure from the principle of their divine master, have been lamentable. Religion, accepting the patronage of the state, has been obliged to submit to the dictates of the politicians and the potentates on whom it depended for its support. Hence the world has witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of statesmen and legislators, assuming the functions of theologians ; defining truth and error according to the dictates of their own sagacity ; prescribing the mode of faith and form of worship that shall be maintained and observed within their dominions ; and regulating the qualifications that shall be required in the members and officers of that church, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the only King and Head. It was a true but humiliating avowal made by one of the prelates of the church of England, "that the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and all its contents, formed but a long Act of Parliament."

Established churches have seldom displayed that spirit of moderation and forbearance, which the Gospel enjoins. They have generally been found to be animated by a feeling of hostility towards those whose conscience compelled them to withdraw from their communion. In their property, in their civil privileges, in their social relations, dissenters from every established church, have been made to feel that they are regarded by their fellow-citizens as an inferior *caste*. Hence have proceeded discontent on the one side ; arrogance on the other ; suspicion, jealousy and alienation ; party spirit, factious dissension ; violence, bitterness and strife. These results are inevitable, so long as unequal laws are enforced.

Their necessary consequence is to make one party proud and overbearing; the other clamorous and disaffected.

The feelings which an establishment engenders, are thus opposed to the influence of its religious institutions, and to the extension of its doctrines. Except Ireland, there is not in Europe, a country having an established church, in which the adherents of that church did not, three centuries ago, outnumber all those who dissented from its tenets. There is not now an established church in any country of Europe where difference of opinion is tolerated, in which the dissenters do not form the majority of the population. An established church, indeed, is necessarily an inefficient instrument for the propagation of religious truth. Men will not consent to be taught their religion by those whom they regard as usurpers over their consciences, and enemies to their natural and inalienable rights.

We have made these observations to guard ourselves against the suspicion of being actuated by any desire to impugn the fidelity or general character of the clergy of the church by law established in Ireland. It is true that in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the adherents of that church were esteemed at least equal in number to those who refused to adopt the principles of the reformation: it is true that in the time of Charles II, the members of the Established Church were computed at *one third* of the entire population of Ireland; that in the reign of Queen Anne, Dean Swift estimated them at *one fourth*; and that at the present day they are probably less than *one tenth* of the Irish people. This progressive diminution of their relative numbers, we do not attribute to the neglect or the incapacity of the clergy, so much as to the evils of their situation. Their position is such as, of necessity, to deprive them of much of the influence which they would otherwise exert upon public opinion. That they have failed, that they have notoriously and egregiously failed, in all their attempts to bring over the Irish people to their church, is true, and undeniable. That the fault is altogether their own, we cannot admit. The legislature by its unjust and partial preference has inspired an aversion, which no efforts of theirs could overcome.

For the same reason we cannot blame individual members of the established hierarchy, so severely as we otherwise might, for the intemperance, arrogance and inhu-

manity, which a few among them have exhibited, in enforcing what they consider to be their right ; and what indeed is so, by the law of the land. They have been brought up with high notions of church pre-eminence and authority. They have been, from their youth, the associates of those who held similar opinions. The enactments of the state, have warranted them in looking down upon dissentients as a degraded tribe ; and any resistance to their legal demands they have been taught to regard as an act of disobedience to all authority, human and divine : and a crime marking out its author as beyond the pale of their sympathy. And hence we have no doubt that many of them would have no scruple in employing means for levying their ecclesiastical dues, which they would have shuddered at the very thought of using, for the enforcement of any private and personal claim.

To take for instance the case of Rathcormac, which has given occasion to the powerful discourse which is enumerated at the head of this article. The circumstances are briefly these. The parishioners of Archdeacon Ryder, (who, it appears, are almost exclusively Roman Catholics,) have entered into a mutual compact,—tacit or express, it matters not which,—to refuse payment of tithe to him, as the clergyman of a church whose doctrines they disbelieve. The Archdeacon applies for the aid of a military force, which he obtains : and with the assistance of this force, and farther aided by the presence of another magistrate, he traverses the parish, compelling various persons to pay him the amount of his demand for tithe, or to take an oath that they will do so within a limited time. In the course of his expedition, he arrives at the premises of a certain Widow Ryan, who appears to have been one of the recusants. He is refused admittance, by a large body of the neighbouring peasants, assembled for the purpose of preventing him from levying a distress. The soldiers are ordered to fire : and nine men are slain, including one of the sons of Widow Ryan. The clergyman then obtains an engagement for the payment of his tithe, and the forces are withdrawn.

Now we hold it very possible that Archdeacon Ryder may be in all the other relations of life an estimable and even a humane man. We think it very likely that he would abominate the thought, of putting nine of his fellow-creatures to death, rather than dispense with the pay-

ment of a simple contract debt ; and yet that he may be able to look back upon the transaction at the farm of Gurtroe without remorse. Indeed he has declared openly in a court of justice, that he feels a perfect conviction, that “ his conduct throughout the melancholy affair was perfectly correct, and that he had done nothing which he was not prepared to justify ; nothing which he would not do again, if the circumstance were again to occur.”

It also appears to us very probable, that the Widow Ryan may be, in other respects, a peaceable and orderly member of society ; and one who on another occasion would be far from wishing to protect herself by force and violence from the necessity of yielding obedience to the law of the land. It is perfectly probable that to this day she does not regard her participation in these events as a crime ; nor feel that she has acted wrong in opposing the execution of the law. There is very little doubt that the peasantry assembled upon that occasion, did not consider their concurrence in the transaction, as a guilty act. Many or most of them, probably, regarded their conduct as meritorious. Possibly they all did so : although there may have been among them persons otherwise peaceable and well disposed.

To what, then, are we to attribute the deplorable events which have caused the name of RATHCORMAC to be a proverb in every corner of civilized Europe ?

To feelings engendered by the state of the law : which compels the members and adherents of one religious communion to contribute to the support of the clergy and the worship of another. Until the law be altered in this respect, such feuds will be perpetual ; and the occurrences of Rathcormac will be paralleled in many a narrative of blood. This law is the master-grievance : and to give peace to our unhappy country, it must be abolished. Palliatives will not do. They have been tried, and found ineffectual. Perseverance in their employment will only render the fall of that system which they are designed to uphold, more certain, more sudden, and more severe.

It is manifest that a *Regium Donum* paid out of the public treasury to any one sect, and not to all,—though less offensive in its mode of collection than tithe, and so far less objectionable,—is built upon principles equally erroneous. Ecclesiastical endowments, to be consistent with justice, and capable of rational defence, should extend to all churches and sects. If not extended to all,

they should embrace none.—The exclusion of any one denomination, however small or insignificant, will be regarded by its members as an act of oppression ; and is, in truth, unjust. The exclusion of the majority of any people from the participation of such endowments, so long as they continue to be granted to the minority, is equally irreconcilable with equity, sound policy and common sense.

This is the question with reference to one branch of which the late ministry and the late Parliament have been dissolved, and a new Government, and a new House of Commons installed. May the Ruler of Empires so regulate our national counsels as to promote the interests of peace, happiness, justice and truth ! May our legislators learn wisdom, and our fellow-citizens moderation ; so that their mutual endeavours may conduce to the common good of all !

Intelligence.

IN our last number, we gave a short account of the Installation of the Rev. SAMUEL C. NELSON, late of Dromore, as assistant and successor to his father, Dr. NELSON, in the pastorship of the Presbyterian Congregation of Downpatrick. Want of room compelled us to omit in our report, the following speech, delivered by Mr. NELSON, on his health being given by the chairman at the congregational dinner which took place on the occasion.

“ IN acknowledging the compliment which you and the present company have paid me, I feel myself labouring under varied emotions both of pleasure and of pain.

“ It is a source of painful emotions to reflect, that the cause of the vacancy which I have this day been appointed to fill, is the ill health of him to whom, under God, I am indebted for every thing ; and by whose counsel and instruction not only myself, but many of those present, who were my earliest companions and school-fellows, and who are now like myself filling important stations in society, have been prepared for the discharge of the active duties of life. But it is a source of pleasure and of comfort to hope, that as he is now steadily, though slowly recovering, I may expect for many years, to have the benefit of his advice and assistance.

“ Again, sir, the connexion this day formed has caused one of the most painful separations that I have ever experienced ;—a separation from a flock to whom my heart was bound by a thousand ties—among whom I had formed friendships of the most intimate description—friendships that have been hallowed by those feelings which religion inspires—friendships which, notwithstanding my removal,

will, I have every reason to hope, be continued during time, and revived in eternity. To part from such a flock, nothing could have induced me, but the peculiar circumstances, under which I have been invited to become joint-pastor of this congregation; nor do I believe—I speak it in the hearing of some of the most active and respectable members of Dromore congregation, who have honoured us with their presence,—would any thing else have reconciled the minds of my beloved people to the change.

“I cannot, sir, too highly appreciate the kind and delicate feelings towards both me and my father, with which the *old and respectable* Congregation of Downpatrick have called me to be their pastor. To him, my friends, you have paid the highest tribute of regard, that a Congregation could render to their retiring Minister, and you have fulfilled what was one of his earliest desires regarding me, when I was but a child;—for I well remember that since I was a lisping child, my inclinations pointed to this,—and I believe almost up to the period of my settlement in Dromore, similar sentiments were entertained by my father. He longed to see this day, and his heart rejoices that he has been spared to see it. On me likewise, you have conferred the highest honor that any community could confer upon their fellowman,—the privilege of instructing and guiding yourselves and your children in the most important of all concerns, and of ministering among you in the sacred ordinances of religion;—the privilege of entering your families freely, as a servant of Jesus on all those occasions when the heart is bowed down under the chastenings of heaven, or when it is lifted up in thankfulness for heaven’s mercies; of entering as a friend in whom you can confide, and whose feelings you expect to harmonize with your own amidst the cares and disappointments of life, as well as the pleasures and comforts of your happy homes;—as one whom you look to, and I trust not in vain, to share in your joys, and to sympathize with you in your troubles.

“You have enabled me also to minister to the comfort of the advancing years of those who are well entitled to that “honour and obedience,” which is due from children to the best of parents,—duties which the distance of my former situation would not have permitted me so fully to discharge.

“But I am speaking, sir, as if none were present, but members of our congregation. Is it not a cheering and delightful thing—is it not a source of pride and pleasure both to you and to me, to look around this table, and to see here seated, as members of one family, our brethren of every denomination of Christians? It assures me, sir, that although there may be several points on which we conscientiously differ, yet there is one great principle in which we all agree, and *that* the most important,—in fact the test, the scriptural test, by which that Redeemer on whom we all depend, will recognize and acknowledge us,—“Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” I can appeal to many of you who know me well, that this is the great commandment I have ever laboured to inculcate upon others, and to cherish within my own heart and my own practice, even towards those who have differed most widely from me, in their views of scriptural truth; and the presence of such persons

here this day, I take as an earnest that my labours here also in that sacred cause, shall not be in vain. I shall regard it as my duty, sir, fearlessly to maintain those peculiar principles which distinguish us as a worshipping society of Christians, and which I have always publicly inculcated, because I, at least, believe them most agreeable to scripture, and because I am firmly persuaded that if they were generally adopted, there would be more real christianity in the world, and more thriving seeds of present and future happiness sown in the hearts of all. But whilst I labour with all my might to inculcate such principles, I feel, sir, that I should not be sincere, I should not evince the Christian spirit, if I did not freely concede to others the same right to judge and the same liberty to form their opinions that I claim to myself. No, sir, I never can believe that God will condemn others, because they do not see with my eyes. And I am satisfied that this free expression of our opinions, and this mutual acknowledgment of each other's rights and privileges, is the only peace that is worth possessing, and the only solid ground on which true Christian charity can abide.

"To my Remonstrant brethren, who have honored you, and me, with their presence today, I must say that I part from them with feelings similar to those with which I have resigned my congregation. From my brethren of the Remonstrant Synod generally, and my own Presbytery in particular, I have received kindnesses and attentions, and marks of confidence, to which I shall always revert with feelings of the most lively satisfaction and gratitude. With them I have been associated in the discharge of those duties to God and men, which we believed to be most sacred. With them I have come through those difficulties and struggles, to which the inquisitorial proceedings of religious bigots and despots exposed us,—difficulties, however, that endeared us but the more to each other, and which eventually, under the over-ruling providence of the All-wise, have brightened and extended our prospects, and strengthened the glorious cause in which we were engaged. And I ask them, sir, do they not rejoice—I know that they do, in common with myself, to see that the *old and respectable* Congregation of Downpatrick, have, by the union this day formed,—recognized the great fundamental principles, which are so dear to us all? Do they not rejoice that an humble laborer has been called from their vineyard, to cultivate and cherish those seeds which they believe to be the seeds of virtue, of religion, and of happiness?

"But, in parting from *them* too, as in parting from my congregation of Dromore, I am returning to my father's house—to that elder branch, the Presbytery of Antrim, which more than a century since, in the days of the "immortal Nevin," endured for conscience' sake, similar hardships to those which have more recently been our portion. To the Antrim Presbytery we are all indebted for this goodly example of other days; and to that learned, enlightened and independent body I am myself especially indebted for the education that prepared me for the work of the ministry, and for that counsel and advice which I have hitherto followed, and which I trust I shall still more fully enjoy, now that they have received me as a member of their brotherhood.

"I have only to add my earnest hope and desire, that these two bodies, agreeing as they do, in all the great fundamental points of Bi-

ble Christians, may, like the sticks of Joseph and of Ephraim, in Ezekiel, "become one in our hands," and my still more earnest hope and desire, that we may see the time, when, animosities and discord being unknown, we shall all, of *every* sect and party, live and meet together, under the *one* name and the *one* character of Christians!"

CLAIMS OF THE ENGLISH DISSENTERS.

SIR Robert Peel has introduced a Bill into the House of Commons, for giving relief to the English Protestant Dissenters respecting the celebration of marriage. The measure, we trust, will be carried into effect; as it seems well calculated to remedy the evil complained of under the existing law. Sir Robert Peel proposes to exempt Dissenters from the necessity of holding any communication with the clergy of the Established Church, upon the subject of marriages. The parties about to be married, are to give fourteen days' notice of their intention, to a Justice of the Peace: before whom they are to appear personally at the expiration of that period; and if no legal cause or impediment appear, the magistrate is authorized, on payment of a certain fee, to celebrate the *civil* marriage; leaving to the parties the right of ratifying the civil contract by a religious ceremony, or not, as they may think proper. A certain portion of the fee is to be handed over by the officiating magistrate to the parish clergyman, with a certificate of the marriage, which is to be recorded in the parochial register; and an extract of such registry is to be held as valid proof of the marriage so recorded. It strikes us that the fee for registry, is unnecessarily high; but on the whole the Bill will effect a great improvement in the state of the law; and ought, we think, to give satisfaction to the parties concerned.

REGIUM DONUM.

SEVERAL petitions to parliament have been prepared by congregations connected with the Synod of Ulster, praying for an equalization of *Regium Donum*, on the principle of raising the endowment on *every* congregation to £100 British, per annum. One of these having been introduced to the House of Commons on the evening of the 9th of March, by Colonel Conolly, the Speaker stated, that as it prayed for a grant of money, it could not be presented without the assent of the Crown. Sir Robert Peel said, that he was entrusted with a discretionary power to signify the consent of the Crown to the presentation of petitions for grants from the public funds; but as he could not recommend either the House or his Majesty to comply with the prayer of the present petition, he thought he best discharged his duty by withholding the royal assent. The petition was, in consequence, withdrawn. A Deputation from the Synod of Ulster lately waited on the Government in London, to confer with them respecting the arrangement of this matter. We have not heard what has been their success: but we are of opinion that the best friends to the *Regium Donum* in times like the present, are those who say the least about it.

OBITUARY.

Died—on Friday, the 6th of March, ANNE, wife of the Rev. T. D. HINCKS, L. L. D. of the Royal Belfast Institution. She was the eldest child of the late Mr. W. BOULT, of Chester, and was born 25th Nov. 1767. In September, 1791, she was married to her surviving husband; of whose life she constituted the chief source of earthly happiness for upwards of 43 years that they lived together.

The death of this excellent lady, after a short illness, has occasioned a very general and deep regret in the minds of those who were acquainted with her. Possessed of a cultivated and well regulated understanding, with great kindness of heart and steadiness of affection, she attached her friends to her by strong ties of sympathy and regard. Hence her loss has been extensively felt and deplored. In the words of one who knew her intimately and long, “her memory will live in the recollections of those who once experienced the kindness of a heart without guile, and a friendship unaffected and sincere. Even those who enjoyed but a slighter acquaintance were won by the blandness of manner, and the kindness of disposition which marked her conduct to all: but those who knew her most intimately will long cherish the memory of an instructive companion, and a sincerely attached friend.”

Next to the scriptures and religious works, in which she always took pleasure, she was fond of natural history. She formed an extensive collection of native plants, which she dried with care, and gave to the Institution, at Cork; for which she was presented with a pleasing mark of the approbation of the managers when she removed from that city to Fermoy. She latterly felt an interest in conchology. In all such pursuits she was accustomed to “look through nature up to nature’s God.”

She was the early instructor of all her children; and imparted to them a great variety of knowledge; having proved, especially in the case of her elder children, (to whom, having more leisure than she afterwards possessed, she was enabled to devote herself more sedulously,) how very much infants may learn, without injury, or rather with certain advantage to their future progress. She was indeed one of the best of parents; admirably uniting affection and indulgence with judicious controul, in the early years of her offspring; and constant attention to the formation of their habits and character.

Mrs. Hincks was both from early education and subsequent study a confirmed Unitarian: but she could discover and value worth in those of what are called orthodox opinions; and always disliked any harsh expressions respecting them. Bigotry and intolerance were repugnant to her nature. The attachment of those sons who are members of the established church was always grateful to her; and she felt a lively interest in their families.

Besides an infant child, (her sixth,) she had the severe trials of losing an amiable and accomplished daughter in her 21st year, shortly before her removal from Fermoy to Belfast; and a son, the late Rev. John Hincks, of Renshaw-Street Chapel, Liverpool, who died in his 27th year. These losses she bore with Christian resignation; and she is now, we may confidently hope, re-united with those objects of her love, in the blessed regions, where “*there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain.*”

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VOL. VI.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(*Continued from p. 134.*)

CHAPTER XII.

V. 4. How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread.

The loaves placed on a table in the tabernacle, or house of God. *Exod. xxv. 30.*

V. 18. I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles.

The Hebrew word here translated *judgment* means, *Isaiah xlii. 1,* the law to be published by the Messiah, the institution of the Gospel.

V. 20. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment [his cause N.] unto victory.

V. 24. But when the Pharisees heard it, they said : This fellow doth not cast out devils [demons], but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils [demons].

Beelzebub, *the Lord of flies*, an idol supposed to have power over those swarms of flying insects, which often lay waste whole countries in the East. It is used here for any evil spirit.

V. 25. And Jesus knew their thoughts and said unto them : Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

If you consider me as an agent of any evil spirit, how can you account for my hostility to his subjects? And if I am acting in opposition to him, how can you suppose me to be his agent? I must evidently be acting under an authority superior to his.

V. 27. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, [demons], by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.

Do your disciples also, who pretend to expel demons, act in league with Beelzebub? Ask them, and let them judge between us.

V. 29. Else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

As no one can forcibly enter the house of a strong man and pil-lage it, unless he be possessed of strength to bind and confine him, so the power, with which I am enabled to expel demons, proves me possessed of power superior to theirs.

V. 31. Wherefore, I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blas- phemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men, &c.

“Wherefore, (that is, in consequence of what they said about Beelzebub,) I say unto you, All sin or blasphemy will [or may] be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven unto men.”—*Newcome*.

The blasphemy which was pronounced unpardonable, was not, speaking evil of the person of the Holy Ghost, but of the mirac- ulous powers which Jesus exercised. Our blessed Lord’s denunciation was pointed, not against such blasphemy or evil speaking, as mere mistake or indiscretion might lead men into, but such as proceeded from wilful and deliberate wickedness (like that of the Pharisees then present and that with which he charges the Jews immediately after- ward, v. 34, “O generation of vipers,” &c.) For when, upon the Apostles receiving the gift of tongues, there were some that mock- ing said, “These are full of new wine,” Acts II. 13. St. Peter instead of denouncing them as unpardonable sinners, applied him- self to convince them of their mistake, and exhorted them to re- pent: and when Simon attempted to bribe Peter to communicate to him the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Peter exhorted him to “repent of this his wickedness; and pray God, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him.”

These observations are confirmed by Mark iii. 29, 30. “But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in DANGER of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.” This shews that our Saviour’s words had a par- ticular reference to what had been said by the Pharisees.

V. 32. Neither in this world [age], neither [nor] in the world [Gr. in that] to come.

The Greek word for *age* or *world*, expressed in English characters is *æon*, which in Latin is turned into *ævum*, signifying an *age*. The original word refers to *time*, and is sometimes applied to the time before or after the birth of Christ, and sometimes to the time before or after the end of the world. This ambiguous word perplexes some important texts.

“This text is taken by many for no more than a stronger and fuller way of saying, that it shall not, or shall never be forgiven; which are the expressions used by St. Mark and St. Luke. Some under- stand by it, neither in the age or dispensation of the Law, which was then present when our Saviour spoke, nor in that of the Gospel, which was ready to take place of it; for so the phrases, “this world” and the “world to come,” are used in the New Testament.”—*Abp. Secker*.

V. 33. Either make the tree good, and his [its] fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his [its] fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his [its] fruit.

His was formerly used in a neuter sense.

If my life be irreproachable and benevolent, you should judge favourably of my doctrine; if my doctrine be holy and edifying, you should judge favourably of my character; "for the tree is known by its fruit." In like manner you may judge of the conduct and teaching of the Pharisees: if the one be corrupt, the other cannot be pure: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?"

V. 38. Master, we would see a sign from thee, &c. [meaning a sign from heaven. Luke xi. 16. Matt. xvi. 1.]

V. 40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly [or cavity]. &c.

"Whale's belly:" rather large fish's; such as the Orca, or Lamia, so called from the size of his throat, which would admit a man to stand in it; whereas a whale's throat is not capable of swallowing a man. The word translated *Whale* means any large fish. "The whale has a receptacle of enormous size, extending from the mouth to a considerable distance under the trunk of the body." *Dr. Roget*.

"In the heart of the earth;" in the bosom of the earth. Psalm cxxxix. 15. "In the lowest parts of the earth." The grave is sometimes expressed by similar phrases.

V. 43. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he [the spirit] walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none, &c.

This is a beautiful and instructive parable, or rather allegory, founded on the popular notions of evil spirits and demoniacal possessions, with which the Jews were perfectly familiar. As the diseases of maniacs often increased in violence after a transient recovery, so that generation would go on to higher degrees of wickedness.

Dry and barren places, deserts, ancient ruins, and burying-places, were supposed to be the usual haunts of demons, when not employed in tormenting men. In Scripture, "a dry and thirsty land" means a desert country.

It would seem impossible for any one to understand this whole description in a literal sense; or to think that it was intended to be so understood.

V. 47. Behold thy mother and thy brethren, &c.

Our Lord's reply seems imputable in some degree to the conduct of his relations, recorded Mark iii. 21. *Brother* often means *cousin-germain*.—Newcome.

CHAPTER XIII.

V. 1. The same day went Jesus out of the house.

Where he was, when his mother and brethren stood without. Mat. xii. 47. See Mark iii. 19.

V. 3. And he spake many things unto them in parables.

A parable is a story containing a moral, or useful advice and instruction. A parable, in Scripture, sometimes signifies an obscure expression or precept. Psalms lxxviii. 2. "I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old." See Prov. xxvi. 7.

V. 8. But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.

See Gen. xxvi. 12. "Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold." Herodotus says, that a part of Lybia produced an hundred-fold; and of Babylonia, two or three hundred-fold.—*Hewlett.*

V. 11. It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, &c.

Compare 1 Cor. xiii. 2. A mystery, in the usual Scripture sense of the word, is a doctrine or fact unknown, or obscurely intimated, which Christ or his Apostles discovered or made fully known. As, that all should not die at the last day, but all should be changed, 1 Cor. xv. 51: and, that the Gentiles should be admitted into the Christian covenant, Eph. iii. 3—6. Thus Matt. xiii. 30—33. 47—50, contained mysteries.—*Newcome.*

The parable of the sower was a mystery until it was explained.

The multitude then present were incapable of profiting by the doctrine of our Lord; he therefore reserved his exposition of the parable for the benefit of his more teachable disciples.

V. 12. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, &c.

For the well-disposed and attentive disciple will always be favoured with assistance and instruction; but those who are obstinately ill-disposed and inattentive cannot expect such favour, but will rather become more incapable of learning, and will even lose the advantages they already enjoy.

"The promise in this verse relates to the improvement, which every individual is required to make of the talent committed to his care; and the threat respects thoughtless, indolent, and negative characters."—*Hewlett.*

V. 13. Therefore speak I to them in parables, &c.

This, therefore, is my motive for veiling the truth under parable, because those of them who have been eye-witnesses of my miracles, have not been convinced; and those who have heard authentic accounts of them, have not been persuaded of their credibility, and admitted them as proofs of my divine mission.

V. 14. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, &c.

So that I may justly apply to the present age the words of Isaiah, vi. 9. "By hearing ye shall hear," &c. "Ye shall hear with hearing," is a well known Hebraism, signifying the certainty of the matter to which it is applied. For this kind of repetition, according to the genius of the Hebrew language, is the strongest manner

of affirmation : for example, *dying ye shall die*, and, *ye shall die the death*.

V. 19. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, &c.

Considereth it not, or, mindeth [regardeth] it not ; or hearkeneth not [attendeth not] to it.—*Newcome*.

V. 21. Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while, [endureth but for a while, Mark iv. 17,] &c.

The word translated *offend* is equivalent to apostatize, or fall away. See Luke viii. 13.—*Newcome*.

Rather, perhaps, he is disgusted and taketh offence at, or is ashamed of me and my doctrine. Matt. xi. 6, "And blessed is he who-soever, shall not be offended in me." Mark viii. 38. Luke ix. 26.

V. 25. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.

Tares, a weed ; darnel or cockle.

V. 33. Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field.

The Gospel, or the church of Christ, is likened to that species of mustard which, in Syria and Palestine, grows to an enormous height, from a seed extremely minute compared with the bulk of the plant. This figure represents the diffusion of the Gospel and the extension of the Church.

It is mentioned in the Jerusalem Talmud, that, one Simon had a mustard tree capable of being ascended by climbing. Another mustard tree had three branches ; one of which furnished shade for potters to work under. Another writer says, that he saw birds among the branches, though he did not see their nests.

V. 33. The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.

The expansion of the church is here likened to the effect of leaven, yeast, or barm, in causing a lump of dough to swell and rise.

These "three measures" were supposed to be equal to an ephah, and this was the quantity of flour which the Jews were accustomed to mix at one time.

V. 44. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field, &c.

V. 45. Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls, &c.

The parable of the treasure may apply to those who meet with the Gospel by accident, without seeking for it ; and that of the pearl, to those who find it by diligent search.

V. 47. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, &c.

The church will include both good and bad, but the good only will be saved. Many of his hearers were probably fishermen.

V. 52. Then said he unto them: Therefore every scribe which is instructed [Gr. made a disciple] unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

Every public teacher of Christianity ought to study the precepts and doctrines of it with such industry, that he, like a careful and provident master of a large family, may lay up such a fund of ancient and modern knowledge, that he may be able to satisfy the wants of his disciples on every occasion.

V. 55. Is not this the carpenter's son? &c.

It was a custom among the Jews, that they learnt some kind of manual work, even though their circumstances were good and their education liberal. See Acts xviii. 3.

Joses is the same with Joseph.

CHAPTER XIV.

V. 1. At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, &c.

The Herod here mentioned was Herod Antipas, or Antipater, tetrarch of Galilee, (Luke iii. 1), and son of Herod the Great. A tetrarch was a governor of a province, literally of the fourth part of a kingdom. Philip (ver. 3) was Herod Philip, another son of Herod the Great, by Mariamne. He was a private person, and not the tetrarch of Iturea: for that tetrarch married the daughter of Herodias, mentioned in this transaction, whose name was Salome. Herodias was daughter of Aristobulus, the eldest son of Herod the Great.

V. 2. This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him [Gr. are wrought by him].

The Jews had an expectation that Elias should come, or some of the old prophets; but there was neither tradition nor prophecy to support this conjecture of Herod. It seems to have been suggested by his own guilty conscience.

V. 6. The daughter of Herodias danced before them.

In the Greek, it is *in the midst*; that is, in the midst of the company.

V. 7. Whereupon he promised with an oath, to give her whatsoever she would ask, &c.

Promises are not binding where the performance is unlawful. There are two cases of this: one where the unlawfulness is known to the parties, at the time of making the promise. The other case is, where the unlawfulness did not exist, or was not known, at the time of making the promise. The lawfulness is an implied condition in the promise; which condition failing, the obligation ceases. Of this

nature was Herod's promise to Salome. The promise was not unlawful in the terms in which Herod delivered it; and when it became so by her choice, Herod was discharged from the obligation of it.—*Paley*.

V. 19. He blessed, [or gave thanks—as the word is translated, in Matt. xxvi. 27. Mark xiv. 23. Luke xxii. 19, and Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 24.]

V. 23. And when the evening was come, he was there alone.

The Jewish evening was divided into two parts; the first, mentioned in v. 15, began at 3 o'clock: the second, mentioned here, began at 6.

V. 25. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

The four watches consisted of three hours each, from our six in the evening till six in the morning. These answered to evening, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning: Mark xiii. 35.

V. 27. They were troubled, saying: It is a spirit, [Gr. an apparition, or phantom.]

V. 34. And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

This district of country extended along the west side of the lake, to which it gave its name, about four miles, and was in breadth, upon an average, about two miles and a half. It is supposed to have been the same as Chinneroth, or Cinneroth, in the Old Testament.

V. 35. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him.

“Had knowledge of him;” that is, recognized him. He had been in that country before. Matt. viii. 28.

(To be Continued.)

ATONEMENT AND SATISFACTION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—That our Saviour by his sufferings and death has rendered to divine justice, a penal satisfaction and atonement for the sins of men, is a doctrine in the highest degree irrational and unscriptural, and fraught with consequences deplorably pernicious. It is, however, a doctrine boldly and broadly laid down by the canonized founders of the system styled orthodox; strenuously inculcated by preachers possessed of more zeal than knowledge; and most firmly believed by a great majority of the laity in these countries. Notwithstanding these

well-known facts, some theologians have lately stepped forward as ostensible defenders of Christ's atonement, who have had shrewdness enough to perceive, and decency enough to be ashamed of the absurdities involved in the expositions of this dogma sanctioned by their respective churches. Such polemics have dexterously accommodated their conduct to the perplexing difficulties of their situation. Having subscribed certain creeds, an open renunciation of which would be attended with worldly loss, and being naturally solicitous to preserve an appearance of consistency, they have flauntingly displayed the armorial banner of orthodoxy, joined vociferously in the war-shout of her sincere partizans, and affected a furious ardour for the protection of her intrenchments, whilst they have silently and treacherously abandoned to the enemy some of her most important positions. Hear the declaration of the pseudo-calvinistic Dr. Wardlaw:—"That by the mediation of Christ any change was produced in the Divine nature, from previous vindictive cruelty, to benevolence and pity, is a supposition full of blasphemous impiety." The good Doctor seems to have forgotten his favourite Confession of Faith. Hear also the words of Archbishop Magee, the most vaunted of modern advocates for the doctrine of atonement. This haughty polemic, notwithstanding the venomous bile which he has foamed out on heterodoxy of every description, proves after all to be heterodox himself. He asserts, "that the sacrifice of Christ was never deemed by any one who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of the atonement, to have made God placable." And far behind these two worthies, comes *poor panting Mr. Paul*, of Carrickfergus, crying out, (as loudly as his weak lungs will allow,) that "neither the *act* nor the *stain* of sin was imputed to the Redeemer." With such renegadoes from the creed of their voluntary adoption, and to which they have assented and consented, I am not called on to enter into controversy. To follow such vulpine skulkers through all their divergent windings, would be an endless and a useless undertaking. During times of quietude, they disport promiscuously with other animals of the same species, in the sunny glades of the forest, but on the first intimation of approaching danger, each of these cunning ones scampers off by a separate pathway towards his favourite hiding-place; and whilst the pursuer is occupied in running down one of

them, the rest effectuate an escape. Orthodoxy when hard pressed, displays amazing versatility; and adopts as many incongruous forms, as Proteus, celebrated in heathen mythology, is fabled to have had the power of assuming. The views which have been exhibited of the atonement are almost as numerous, and almost as incompatible as those which have been given of the Trinity—and the propounders of those different modifications of the tenet, all bawl out with equal vehemence, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!” Now in the midst of these inconsistent expositions, what course are we to follow? Are we to remain silent and inactive until this family turmoil shall subside, and certain wrangling subscribers of the same formulas, shall come to an agreement among themselves? Are we to forbear from impugning the consentaneous decision of both the English and Scottish churches with regard to the doctrine in question; because a few members of these bodies have apostatized from that decision? Must we not venture to contradict an erroneous article of belief, because some of its professed abettors contradict one another? Surely not. Neither the Westminster Confession, nor the Book of Common Prayer, is a sealed up volume. We have access to those standards; and in both we find it as plainly and distinctly declared as words can declare any thing, that Christ made a vicarious satisfaction to divine justice, for the sins of men. On one point, indeed, these two formularies differ. The latter says that he suffered for the sins of the whole world; and the former, that his atonement extended only to a few persons arbitrarily elected. Both authorities, however, concur in asserting, that an innocent individual was punished as a substitute for the guilty. The General Synod of Ulster has lately re-inforced subscription to the Westminster Confession. By the Church of Scotland, and by the Seceders and Covenanters, conformity to the same rule of faith has always been required; and the Church established in England and Ireland has been uniformly consistent in exacting from its clergy a hearty assent and consent to all and every thing contained in the 39 articles and the Book of Common Prayer. Instead therefore, of following any eccentric divine connected with those communities, through his fanciful meanderings, I feel myself fully warranted in considering the views of the atonement, promulgated in the creeds and

catechisms of the abovementioned churches, as the views entertained by the great body of their respective members. Any other exposition of the doctrine is nothing more than the exposition of an individual; and cannot be regarded as that of the religious corporation to which he belongs; nor as that which the laity of his communion have been made to imbibe with their mothers' milk. For the two-fold purpose then of averting the possibility of Jesuitical evasion, and of guarding myself against the charge of misrepresentation, I shall state the dogma about to be canvassed, precisely as it has been stated in the accredited standards of orthodoxy; and be it remembered that to one or other of those standards my clerical opponents have solemnly declared their adherence.

In the 8th chapter of the Westminster Confession, it is declared, "that the Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father." In the 11th chapter of the same Book, we find the following statement—"Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, not by *infusing righteousness into them*; but by pardoning their sins and accepting their persons *as* righteous—not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them *as their* righteousness; but by imputing the obedience, and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on his righteousness by faith." Reader, ponder on this quotation—view it in all its bearings—trace its necessary consequences; and then say whether a fouller libel was ever penned, or uttered against the moral administration of that Being who hath declared that "without holiness no man shall see him."

In questions 27 and 29 of the Shorter Catechism, Christ is represented, as having "undergone the wrath of God," and thus "purchased man's redemption."

In the 31st article of the Church of England, we are told, "that the offering of Christ once made, is a perfect satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is no other satisfaction for sin but that alone."

To the foregoing authorities I shall now subjoin a few pithy sayings of men recognized as burning and shining lights in their respective churches.—Calvin affirms, in

his Institutes, that "God appeased himself by the blood of the cross, and laid upon Christ the burden of damnation from which we were delivered." Luther assures us, that "Jesus became the greatest transgressor, murderer, thief, rebel and blasphemer, that ever *was* or *could* be in the whole world; for he being made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, is not now an innocent person, but a sinner." Are not these most horrible declarations? Bishop Beveridge says, "I may not only cry, Mercy, mercy, O gracious Father; but justice, justice, O righteous God: be just and faithful to acquit me of that debt which my surety hath paid for me." Folios, ponderous folios, might with facility be made up of equally disgusting quotations from the writings of divines extolled for soundness in the faith. The few authorities which have been adduced, warrant me in asserting, that according to the Orthodox scheme, Christ actually incurred the whole guilt, and suffered the full punishment of men's transgressions; and by doing so, satisfied the justice, and appeased the vengeance of his Father. Reader, has not this fact been incontrovertibly established? Bear it, then, in your mind.

I shall now, in the first place, endeavour to shew, that the doctrine thus impartially stated is repugnant to reason, and inconsistent with the known attributes of God.

The fundamental error of the Calvinistic hypothesis consists in supposing sin to be of the same nature with a bond debt, which may with equal propriety be discharged either by the original contractor, or by any friend who comes forward on his behalf. This is an egregious mistake. Between moral delinquency and pecuniary obligations there is an essential distinction,—a distinction universally admitted and acted on. If a man owes me ten pounds, the law will compel me to accept payment from him, or from any person tendering payment in his name, and there the matter ends; he is no farther responsible; but if the same man rob me of ten pounds on the king's high-way, no restitution, by himself, or by a proxy, will suffice. He must suffer in his own person for the crime. Wickedness is inalienable and intransferable. It adheres inseparably to the perpetrators, and cannot without the grossest injustice be ascribed to the innocent. Even the God of Omnipotence *could* not make any one really guilty of transgres-

sions which he never committed; and surely a God of justice would never *punish* one for transgressions of which he had not been guilty. To attribute iniquity to a pure and spotless character, is to fix on him a false charge. To assert then that our sins were imputed to a person "who knew no sin," is to accuse the righteous Jehovah of falsehood, cruelty and tyranny.

The Omniscient is incapable of viewing things in a wrong light—he sees all his creatures as they really are; and it would be the height of impiety to suppose, that he could regard them as being what, in fact, they are not. If personally virtuous, they appear to him as virtuous—if personally wicked, they appear to him as wicked. And according to this discriminative estimate of their true and genuine characters, must be his mode of dealing with them respectively. He never did, and he never will treat the faithful, as if they had been disobedient; nor the disobedient as if they had been faithful. These are self-evident truths, not one of which can be contradicted; and they amount to a moral demonstration, that under the government of a God, "who is righteous in all his ways," there can be no such thing as a translocation of either guilt or punishment; and consequently that the Calvinistic exposition of the nature of our Saviour's atonement, is totally destitute of foundation. Against all such arbitrary imputation either of merit or demerit, the Almighty himself has expressly and solemnly protested. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."—Scripture elsewhere declares, "that he who condemneth the just is an abomination to the Lord."

Some Orthodox divines, writhing under the cogency of such considerations as the foregoing, have had recourse to distinctions, salvos and subterfuges ridiculously absurd. One of those seceders from their own creed—one of those covenanting deniers of the covenant, maintains, as I have already intimated, "that neither the *act* of sin, nor the *stain* of sin, was imputed to Christ. And what then *was* imputed to him? Why, merely the *guilt* of sin, or a legal obligation to punishment." On my word this *sinless* and *stainless* guilt must have been a rather extraordinary species of iniquity—a moral commodity of a nature perfectly unique—a curiosity nowhere to be found but in the cabinet of a theological

virtuoso ! In fact it is guilt divested of all guiltiness, and nothing more than a new name for unsullied innocence. How a Being "upright in all his judgments," came to lay a person of unsullied innocence under a "legal obligation to endure punishment," this modern Thomas Aquinas has not condescended to explain.

In human codes, existing statutes are sometimes at variance with justice, and for the purpose of obviating the evil, legal fictions similar to that now commented on have been occasionally devised ; but it was reserved for the profound sage of Carrickfergus to ascribe such deceptive contrivances—such sleight of hand juridical dexterity to the supreme ruler of the universe, all whose laws are perfect. With what nauseous contortions of countenance would Luther, and Calvin, and John Knox have spewed out of their mouths, this "miserable dilution" of their own pungent and high-proof theology ?

I would ask any man who has not irrevocably renounced common sense, whether the Almighty would not have more effectually vindicated "the honour of his glorious justice," by allowing sinners to pass altogether unpunished, without substitution or satisfaction of any kind, than by visiting their delinquency, on one who was holy, harmless and undefiled, and subjecting him to the penalty which they, and they only, had incurred ? I would ask, whether such an arbitrary procedure, supposing it have been adopted, would not have been a double violation of equity—first in allowing the guilty to escape all retributive castigation,—and next by inflicting on an innocent individual the castigation which ought to have been confined to the real offenders ?

Let no person allege, that the assumption of human guilt, and the consequent submission to condign punishment, were voluntary acts on the part of our Redeemer, and of course that his father's acceptance of the satisfaction thus generously tendered, was perfectly consistent with equity. This allegation has already been virtually refuted. It has been shewn that the arbitrary transference of sin from one individual to another, is a moral impossibility ; and therefore the doom merited by a guilty world, could never be rightfully executed on the immaculate Messiah. His willingness to undergo the penalty, instead of lessening, would aggravate the wrongfulness of the supposed imputation of criminality. It would not make the imputation less false, nor the

punishment less unjust. He had committed no offence, and could not with propriety be regarded as an offender. An injury done to a virtuous and generous individual, naturally excites more cordial detestation, than one done to a less amiable character. Historians say that Dionysius of Syracuse once meditated a procedure not quite so atrocious as that now under consideration. He was about to put to death a virtuous patriot who had become surety for the appearance of a friend equally virtuous—that friend, however, returned in time to stop the execution: yet, for even this approximation to the conduct which Calvinists attribute to their Maker, the tyrant's memory has been held in abhorrence by all succeeding generations.

Suppose that a blameless man should spontaneously offer to suffer the capital punishment to which a malefactor had been doomed, would the substitution be accepted by any court of justice upon earth! A case precisely in point actually occurred not long since in the metropolis of the British empire.—When Mr. Fauntleroy was found guilty of forgery, and sentenced to lose his life for the offence, Mons. Angelini, a teacher of foreign languages, appeared before the chief civic magistrate, and earnestly entreated that he might be allowed to undergo the death to which the unfortunate culprit had been condemned, pleading as a precedent the vicarious satisfaction rendered by his Saviour. This man's deportment indicated nothing of either insanity or insincerity; yet the magistrate rejected the application as contrary to every principle both of law and equity; thus practically refuting by his decision, a doctrine which was probably an elemental article of his own creed.

The dogma against which I am remonstrating slanders the character of God. It represents him as a capricious, wrathful, and revengeful tyrant, whom nothing but blood could appease, and to whom it was apparently matter of indifference, whether he wreaked his frantic fury on the innocent, or on the guilty. Let me employ an apposite illustration.—Suppose the people of this or of any other country, to have risen in rebellion against the legitimate authority of their Sovereign—Suppose them to be subdued, and brought in chains to the footstool of his throne—Suppose the monarch inclined to exercise clemency towards them, though at the same time he deems it expedient to testify his displeasure by

the exercise of some species of severity—Suppose that under the influence of these feelings, he should thus address the trembling culprits, “Wicked and unworthy wretches that ye are, there is not one amongst you all, who has not incurred, and justly incurred capital condemnation; yet I cannot but feel some compassion for your miserable situation. It is in my power, to be sure, either to pronounce on you a mitigated doom, or to promulgate a general act of amnesty; but my sense of rectitude forbids both these modes of procedure. My sovereignty must be vindicated—my justice must be satisfied. A victim I must have. Here is my amiable and well-beloved son, the partner of my throne, my equal in rightful authority, and you have offended against him, as heinously as you have offended against me. His disposition, however, is less stern than mine. *He* looks for no satisfaction—he freely pardons your rebellion against himself; and not only does so, but has generously consented to suffer death in your stead. To him, then, I impute your transgression. On him shall my vengeance be wreaked. In his benevolent bosom shall my sword be sheathed to the hilt; he shall endure the penalty which you have deserved, and thus do I manifest my justice—thus do I uphold the honour of my regal administration!”

The two cases are exactly similar—and I ask any man whose moral perception is not vitiated by prejudice, whether the conduct thus fairly portrayed ought to be extolled as equitable and merciful, or reprobated as blind and brutal—whether it accords better with the character of the God of love, or with that of a blood-thirsty Moloch!

The extension of a free pardon to penitent offenders is by no means inconsistent with justice. Justice requires that we render to every man his due; but does not require that we should rigidly exact from every man, all that is due to us. Justice requires that we should pay to others the debts to which they are entitled; but does not constrain us to take from others the uttermost farthing which it may be legally in our power to demand. Justice would be violated by a person in authority who should withhold from individuals any benefit, privilege, or right, to which they may have an equitable claim; but no sovereign earthly, or heavenly, acts unjustly when he holds forth the sceptre of forgiveness to transgressors

whom he believes to be sincerely determined on reformation. In civil societies, indeed, offenders are punished without any inquiry being made relative to their repentance, because it is impossible for civil governors to know whether repentance is genuine or feigned; but God searcheth the hearts, and trieth the reins of the children of men. He cannot be imposed on by false representations; but can determine with unerring rectitude, *when* to pardon and *whom* to pardon.

SIGMA.

(To be Continued.)

THE UNITY OF THE FATHER AND THE SON.

(To the Editor of the Bible Christian.)

SIR,—This subject has been already so fully discussed, and the Unitarian view of it so satisfactorily expounded in the pages of your useful periodical, that to introduce it again to the notice of your readers may require a word of explanation. My object in doing so is not to re-write what every one, in the least conversant with the subject, perfectly understands; nor is it to propose any new exposition of a text which has been already commented upon even to satiety: nor is it merely to defend sentiments whose most powerful advocate is their plainness, their reasonableness, and simplicity. There is something more which truth occasionally requires of us; namely, to contrast her in all her loveliness with the deformity of error, that her native clearness, beauty, and simplicity may more conspicuously appear; that she may more powerfully captivate the minds of her admirers, and that her opponent may the more readily be known by one of her infallible characteristics,—to wit,—her inconsistency. This, I fear, some of her advocates have occasionally neglected. Hitherto Unitarians, strange to say, have been almost invariably placed on the defensive in advocating opinions that are acknowledged to be in accordance with the apparent, with, in fact, the plain and obvious sense of Holy Writ. They have even been charged with perverting and wilfully corrupting the sacred word to suit their own purposes, though the general tenor of that word is admitted to be in favour of their doctrines; and they have again and again been put to the trouble of explaining detached, isolated passages; while their op-

ponents, with the whole drift of the book of life against them, have contented themselves with bare assumption, and while they have been allowed to amuse us with assertions, in place of clear, rational explications. This is certainly granting to the opponents of Bible Christianity a vantage ground which they have no right to occupy; and though I do not mean to call upon them for such explications, in order to dislodge them from that vantage ground; yet, if they be not altogether invulnerable to the weapons of reason, I would convince them that it is they, not we, who are called upon to explain and defend their views of that unity that all acknowledge to subsist between the Father and the Son.

In what, let us ask, does that unity consist? It is, says the Trinitarian, an unity of substance. No, replies the Bible Christian, it is an unity of purpose, will, or design. How then are we to decide? Do we appeal to the scriptures on that subject? The scriptures afford us no means of determining. They merely declare that Christ and the Father are one, without affirming any thing as to the *nature* of that unity. Indeed, were we to infer any thing from a Greek gender, they would rather favour the Unitarian view; for, as it is well known, it is the neuter, not the masculine, which is used.—But let that pass.—We must, therefore, have recourse to our own reason to solve the difficulty; and in recurring to it, the fairest mode of reasoning, I conceive, will be, to use in this case the same rule or test by which we judge of the unity or identity of all beings or objects whether animate or inanimate.

Now it is a well-known maxim in philosophy, that we know nothing of the essence or substance of any being or object whatever. All that we know of them is certain qualities or properties,—philosophically called phenomena. Thus we know not what any piece of matter is really in itself. We know it only by certain qualities, such as the extension, thickness, hardness, solidity, colour, &c. of which it is possessed. Nor do we know anything of the essence of mind. We know it only by its powers of sensation, memory, and judgement; or, by its capacities of perceiving, willing, and reflecting. Take an example. We know not, for instance, what a stone is in itself; we only know that it is what is called a *body*, of a peculiar shape, hardness, brittleness, &c. Nor do we understand what the soul of any individual is, so far

as its essence is concerned. We are acquainted only with those powers in him which I have mentioned, and with some peculiar traits of character that specially belong to him. This philosophical maxim, it may be observed, strikes away the very foundation of the Trinitarian theory; for if we know nothing of the essence or substances of bodies with which we are most familiar, how can we judge concerning the '*substance*' of the Invisible Supreme?—But let that too pass.

As we know nothing, therefore, of the essences or substances, how do we arrive at a knowledge of the unity or identity of beings or objects that we have met with at different times, and under different circumstances? Why, simply by comparing their qualities or properties, and perceiving that *they* are the same. Let us recur to our former illustration. Suppose that we have yesterday seen a stone in a particular spot, and that to day we meet with it in an entirely different place, how do we know it to be the same that we have seen? Simply by perceiving it to be of the same size, shape, colour, and possessed of the same peculiar marks that we had formerly noticed. In the same way do we judge of the identity of individuals. Take for example, a friend who has been for a long time separated from us, who has been residing in a distant country, and whom we have never again expected to see. Suppose that he unexpectedly presents himself to us, gives us his address, and claims our friendship, how do we recognise him to be our *quondam* friend? Why, simply by comparing his present figure and features with our recollections of them as they formerly existed, and perceiving them to be the same. But suppose that figure and features are both so altered that they contain no points of resemblance to what they once were, how then is he to be recognised? In that case it will be more difficult to do so; but it may be done by comparing his knowledge of particular facts with what we know our friend to be certainly possessed of; and we shall be still more assured of his identity, if on a comparison of his peculiar and distinguishing traits of character we find them exactly to correspond with those by which he was formerly distinguished. This indeed is the surest test, for, however form and features may alter, the character generally remains the same.

Such is the universal rule by which we judge of unity and identity in every other case. Now to apply it to the point in question.

Christ, says the Trinitarian, is God, manifest to us in a different way from that in which he formerly revealed himself. The form and feature (if we may use such language of the divinity) are acknowledged to be entirely changed; but yet, it is insisted, he is really and truly "the same in *substance*" with the Father.

Now, as to the substance of any object or being in itself, as has been said, we know nothing. Especially can we know nothing concerning the substance of the Invisible Supreme, for "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten, who is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared him." We are, therefore, to judge of them entirely from their qualities. But the external qualities, in this case, are acknowledged to be entirely different. The form and feature are altogether changed. The mode in which Christ appeared, is completely at variance with any way that the Father had previously manifested himself. We are consequently left to decide entirely and exclusively from the character of each, respecting their unity and identity. And here the reader will observe the glaring inconsistency of pseudo-Orthodoxy.

Instead of a perfect agreement and coincidence of character between the Father and the Son, according to the Trinitarian system, it is well known that the one is represented as a being of the utmost sternness, rigour,—in short of implacable wrath; while the other is depicted as possessed of the utmost gentleness, tenderness, and compassion,—in a word, as a God of love. The Father, say the professors of this system, is a just being, and therefore cannot forgive our sins. The Son is a merciful being, and hath with his own blood purchased our pardon. The Father, for the manifestation of his own glory, hath predestinated some men to everlasting life, while he hath been pleased to pass by, and ordain the others to dishonour and wrath for their sins, to the praise of his glorious justice. The Son willeth not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. The father hath imputed the guilt of our first parents to the whole of their posterity, and the whole world he hath branded with his curse. The Son by his sufferings and death hath rescued them from that guilt and infamy ;

and conferred upon them blessings in their stead. The Father, in short, is a being of the most inexorable justice, who is angry with his creatures every day, who is ever ready to smite, to afflict, and destroy us. The Son is actuated by the most tender compassion, ever seeking to interpose, to shield, and save. Now, can there, by possibility, be two more opposite characters than those above described? Do not Trinitarians themselves, by their representation of those characters, contradict their assertions as to the unity of the beings? Are not such statements inconsistent with their fundamental doctrine? Or is it possible that two beings, thus distinguished, of whom one is stern and cruel, the other mild and merciful—of whom one dooms to perdition, and the other saves from misery—of whom one imputes guilt where there is no transgression, and the other at the cost of his own life saves the actual sinner—of whom one inexorably exacts satisfaction, and the other compassionately pays it—of whom one looks down upon us with the frowns of his wrath, and the other ever contemplates us with a benignant smile,—is it possible that two such beings are identical? Can they, either in mind or substance, be regarded as the same? To me, at least, it is an absolute impossibility. And, therefore, that unity of persons in the Godhead, of which the Trinitarian so loudly talks, I am compelled to regard as sound, *et præterea nihil*. True, he may ascribe to each the same powers and attributes, such as omniscience, infinity, omnipotence; and from these he may infer their unity; but so long as their respective characters are represented as diametrically opposed to one another, his doctrine will be but an inference, nor can the human mind, by any possibility, look upon them as strictly one.

The belief of the Bible Christian, on the contrary, is rational and plain; and much more strictly does he hold that unity. He believes that as just as the Father is, so just likewise is the Son;—that as merciful as the Son is, so merciful is the Father also. The benevolence of the Father, he conceives, is not less than the benevolence of the Son;—The pardoning mercy of the Father not less than the forgiveness of the Son;—the kind compassion of the Father for his creatures' happiness, not less than that benignity which prompted the Son to suffer and to die. Nor does he esteem the Father more arbitrary than the Son; nor does he think him more righteous in

the execution of what is really justice ; nor yet more ready to impute the sins of the fathers to the children ; nor yet more stern, vindictive, and difficult to be appeased. Such as the Son is in mercy and benevolence, such, he believes, is the Father also. Such as was the Saviour's anxiety for the salvation of the world ; such, he conceives, to be his Father's likewise. In short, he looks upon him as a true and fitting manifestation of that father—"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,"—but not that being of whose glory he was the brightness, nor the person of whom he was but the image. The Saviour's power too, he conceives to be a fitting manifestation of the power of omnipotence ;—the Saviour's wisdom a ray of universal intelligence ;—the Saviour's purity, goodness, and humility, a reflection of that purity and condescension that adorn Jehovah. Thus does he conceive of them as *one*,—one in purity of mind,—one in benevolence of purpose,—one in the beneficent work of redemption,—one in intention and exertion in the salvation of mankind. True, he does not believe them to be the "same in substance ;" for of the *substance* of a *spirit* he professes to know nothing. Neither does he esteem them as "equal in power," for Christ himself hath said,—“I can of mine own self do nothing ;” nor yet equal in wisdom, for the Saviour confesses his ignorance of a fact which he declares is known to his Father only ; nor yet in glory, for his doctrine was not his own, but his that sent him. Neither does he believe them to be, in any way, one and the same *being* ; for Jesus hath said that they were two separate and distinct witnesses,—“I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.” Nevertheless the Bible Christian holds that unity much more strictly and properly than those who boast themselves exclusively of believing in it ; for theirs is a unity of incongruities, bound together by some unintelligible thing denominated *substance* ;—while his is a unity of mind—a unity of purpose—that unity of spirit, in short, by which Christ was in the Father and the Father in him—that unity which he exhorted us to cultivate that we may be one as they are,—“I in them and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one—that they may be one even as we are one.”

From the preceding observations, then, I think it plainly appears, that it is, not we, but our opponents who

are called upon to explain and vindicate their views of that unity in question. Ours is, in truth, the only rational explanation that can be given of the doctrine. To talk of the *substances* of *spirits* is surely nothing else than to use words for the purpose of concealing our ignorance instead of communicating one definite idea; and to build a creed on their supposed unity or identity, is, in my mind, to preach credulity, or it may prove infidelity, instead of disseminating true religion. Such a doctrine, in fact, tends to materialize the Deity. It leads the mind away from the contemplation of his spirituality, and fixes it upon something that it denominates his *substance* in its stead; and thus the ignorant are naturally forced to imagine that He who is a spirit, "without body, parts or passions," is, nevertheless, possessed of something material;—they imbibe concerning him the idea that the word substance naturally suggests, however sure they may be that a *body* he cannot be. Neither is there any other way in which the Trinitarian can explain his views of the unity of the Godhead, but by having recourse to this absurd supposition of the Deity's materiality. He may talk of the equality or sameness, if he pleases, of their attributes; but so long as he ascribes to them diametrically opposite characters,—so long as he represents them as actuated by different feelings, contrary affections, opposite dispositions towards the human race,—and so long as he pictures them acting entirely different parts in the great work of man's redemption;—so long will he have a *duality* of infinities, and not a unity,—so long will he have two separate and distinct deities; nor is it in the power of man to force himself to look upon and worship them as really one and the same. B. C. D.

ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF DEATH.

(Continued from p. 125.)

Again; death is commonly regarded as the visitation of God's wrath, as the fruit and punishment of sin. We do not forget the language of scripture on this subject; that 'death entered into the world by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' It is to be remembered, however, that, in many passages where death is said to be the fruit of sin, the word death is used

figuratively ; that mortality is not meant, but misery. This may be seen in the whole of that account which is given of Paul's experience and reasonings in the seventh and eighth chapters of the epistle to the Romans ; and in other instances. And upon the text, before quoted, it has been justly argued, that the death which 'entered by sin' is not the specific calamity of being mortal, but all the evil brought upon us by sin, including whatever is evil in mortality itself. That all this is meant by the word death, we say, has been argued from the circumstance, that it is set in contrast with all the benefits derived from the interposition of our Saviour. As these benefits include more than mere continuance of life, so, it is contended, the contrasted evil which sin is said to introduce, cannot be death to the body merely, but rather death to the soul ; that is, misery, fear, disquietude, and gloom.* And it might be still more strongly urged with reference to this point, that, if mortality were the specific and only evil meant in that passage, it is said to be removed by the interposition of our Saviour. This is the very point which we are labouring to establish. Jesus Christ has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light in the gospel. He has presented new views of mortality. He has taught us, that it is the death of the body only ; that the good man, that the spirit of goodness which is in him, that the intrinsic and intellectual being, 'shall never die.'

We are not, however, anxious to deny, for it is obviously true, that sin has given a complexion to this event ; that it has, to a certain extent, connected pain, and doubt, and gloom with mortality. In some respects, we can see this influence. Sin, which partly consists in the undue indulgence of the body, has made all our diseases more severe and painful. Sin, too, has clouded and darkened the mind, and filled it with inquietude and fear. Sin, then, we repeat, has given a complexion to this event. It has made our departure from this world, not a translation, but a death.

Yet, surely, the departure simply considered, is not to be regarded as an ordination of God's wrath, but of his infinite goodness. Whatever is universal and unavoidable, must always be held to be good. Sin only, the choice of man, is essentially evil. Events, laws, the

*I. B. Koppe in Rom. V. 12.

ordinances of God, are ever good. When we approach the dwelling where death has entered, when we join the circle of mourning friends and kindred, over which the mortal stroke has just brought its stupifying horror, or its heart-rending agony, when that solemn silence, that dread vacuity of death is around us, broken only by the sighs and shudderings of grief and despair, we are apt at first to feel as if we stood in some awful chasm where God is not, or in some overshadowing cloud where he is present only in displeasure. But when we remember that this is the inevitable lot, that there are thousands of such scenes, passing every hour on earth, ten thousand human hearts rent with like sorrow, we are ready to ask—Can this universal fate be otherwise than an ordination of wisdom and goodness? Can the unvarying allotment, to which all the creatures, to which all the children of God are subject, be vindictive? Can that, which befalls all earthly beings, fills all time, and spreads before the eye of Heaven such an uninterrupted scene—can it be a signal measure of God's wrath? The catastrophe, in the darkest view of it, would not be so horrible as the supposition which thus explains it.

Besides, a dissolution of the body, and a departure from this world, results from the very nature and necessity of things. The human frame was not made to live always, and the earth, as evidently, was not designed to support the accumulating generations of mankind. Nay, more; departure at some time or other, from this life, so far from being a penal requisition, must, to every reflecting mind, appear in the highest degree desirable. Let the question be put to the calmer and loftier reflections, and there can be no other answer. *Would we live always? Would we always bear the burden of imperfection and infirmity? Would we always pant for knowledge and happiness that we cannot attain; and shall we ever cling to that load of flesh, and of all the ills that flesh is heir to, which drags us down to the earth? No; we would die; we would depart; we would be released and be at rest. We might desire to mount on the winged chariot of Elijah; but it has pleased God to appoint for us a different way. Be it so, that it is for our sins, or that our sins have cast a shadow over the passage out of this world; shall we not then the more humbly and submissively yield ourselves to it?—not with terror, not with slavish dread, for God does*

not chasten, even for our sins, in unpitying wrath, but in tender mercy.

We would not, then, live always. Earth could not bear us. Humanity could not bear its load. Still more; the mind could not be satisfied. It would ask for other scenes, for other regions, for other sources of knowledge, for other fountains of joy. We would depart, then; and this is but saying, that we would die. We must yield our powers to the sleep of death, that we may awake to a new life. We must change the form and mode of our existence, that we may exist in a higher sphere. We must cease to live as men, that we may begin to live as angels. The unsightly worm must sink to inaction and death, that it may rise from its grovelling in the dust, that it may become an inhabitant of the air, that it may unfold its wings in a new region, and become the creature of life and beauty that God designed it to be. The soul in like manner must drop its 'mortal coil,' that the now undeveloped, the half dormant powers, that mysteriously sleep within it, may awake to their own intellectual and immortal life. It may be as unconscious now, of what it is hereafter to become, as the reptile that crawls upon the earth is of rising to the air and light of heaven. The transformation may be as great, and as much more glorious, as intellect is more glorious than dark and blind instinct. Nor may death be the soul's last transformation. 'There shall be no more death,' indeed; but there may be many changes in its mode of being, while it is passing from glory to glory, through its everlasting progress.

But we must not delay longer to consider some of those views of death, which are, indeed, more just than those already noticed, but which nevertheless, are liable to be wrested into error, through the excessive dread which is entertained of this event. Mortality is not the interruption of being, nor is it any peculiar visitation of God's wrath; but it is still a serious crisis in our existence; and our views of it are not likely to be too serious, if we will only guard our seriousness from superstition, and from all irrational and extravagant influences of the imagination.

Death is a serious event, inasmuch as we are taught that 'after death is the judgment.' With regard to the formalities of that judgment, if it can be supposed that there are any formalities, we know nothing. The

passages in scripture which speak of a throne and a tribunal, or which speak of the soul as meeting its Judge after death, are evidently figurative, and teach us only the general truth, that there is a solemn and strict retribution awaiting us. We cannot *meet* the universal presence in which we ever are; in which we are now, as truly as we ever can be, though we may be hereafter more conscious of it; and we cannot reasonably suppose that the soul is to be called to any literal bar. But there will be a trial of conscience, under circumstances which will give to conscience all its power; and if we could understand what that must be, we should feel that no formalities could add to the fearfulness of that coming hour. It will be enough to leave the sinful man alone with his conscience, to strip him of all the blinding delusions of sense and passion, to strip him of all this world's distinctions, and all its treacherous maxims, and its supporting example and its flattering countenance, to throw aside every screen and veil of self-deception, and to empower memory, in that all-searching light, to call from oblivion every past misdeed, every erring thought, every guilty passion, and every secret and disguised offence; and this, we believe, is the judgment that shall be, in the presence of God and of conscience, after death. Men may do wrong now, and boast of it, may purpose evil and glory in its accomplishment, may oppress and injure, and silence the voice of remonstrance; but an hour of unveiled retribution is approaching them; the time is near when every evil gratification and unjust deed shall become a piercing arrow of conviction. Forms, appearances shall soon give place to realities; the body's enslaving control, to the spirit's action and life; and passion, indulgence, sin, to the manifested and the no longer mistaken judgment of Heaven.

There is a passage in the memoirs of a distinguished author, which we confess strikes us, whenever we read it, with nothing less than the profoundest awe. He mentions an individual, who, though entirely unlearned and ignorant, was accustomed, in fits of insanity, to repeat with great fluency, long passages from Latin and Hebrew writers. The phenomenon drew much attention, and was thought by some to be capable of no other explanation, than that of referring it to demoniacal possession. After much inquiry, it was ascertained that this individual had, in early life, resided in the family of

a learned clergyman, who was accustomed to read and repeat aloud, passages from his favourite authors; and the excitement of insanity had quickened the slumbering memory of the hearer to recall; with such amazing distinctness, the faded and forgotten images of past impressions. 'And this,' exclaims the writer, 'this, perchance, is the dread book of judgment, in whose mysterious language every idle word is recorded! Yea, in the very nature of the living spirit, it may be more possible that heaven and earth should pass away, than that a single act, a single thought, should be loosened or lost, from that living chain of causes, which has formed the abiding character of the soul.*'

Still however, solemn, and justly solemn as this view of death and of the revelation of a future life, is, it is possible to lay too great, or, at least, too exclusive a stress upon that event which is to unfold to us those revelations. Every future moment—not that of death only, not that of the judgment which is immediately to follow,—but every future moment of our being is to answer for every present moment. This is the great law of retribution. None less strict, or less severe belongs to our moral nature. And it does not apply to the future life only, but equally to the present; and all the difference is, that it is now less clearly seen and felt. And it does not apply to any one epoch alone, but to all the periods, to all the moments of our endless being. It is not death, then, that we should fear, but the eternal retribution of conscience. It is not at the moment of death that we should tremble, but at every moment of the future that is to answer for the neglects, and errors, and offences of the mispent past. Virtue is deathless. It is more; it is blessed life. On the 'path of the just that shineth brighter and brighter,' no shadow abideth. The shade of death itself but opens the way to a brighter and more glorious existence. Nay, we must declare a stricter doctrine than this. Virtue *alone* is thus deathless. He who will not obey the great moral laws of his nature, he who lives in hostility to his conscience and in estrangement from his God, can have nothing said to him to mitigate his fears of the mortal hour. He must fear it; he must in reason fear every future hour, and every future scene. If hell is

*Biographia Literaria, Chap. VI.

dreadful to the sinful man, heaven would be more dreadful; if the company of evil beings can yield him no joy, the society of heavenly beings would fill him with despondency and agony. Whither shall he flee? Where shall he go to escape fear or misery, whose present courses are raising up enemies in every future habit, feeling, and remembrance of his soul? Whither, did we say? Alas! it is not time or place only, it is not circumstance or situation, it is not the revealing light or the overshadowing darkness; but it is himself that he has made an enemy and an avenger more dreadful than death!

(To be Continued.)

LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOUR.

THE first and great commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul, all our powers and affections; to mingle with that obedience which power exacts, and fear pays, a degree of affection, on account of the blessings both of nature and grace which we enjoy under the Providence of God, and to testify these sentiments by acts of obedience and worship. The second is to love our neighbour as ourselves. By love are meant both kindness and suitable demonstrations of affection; and by our neighbour, as illustrated by the parable of the good Samaritan, we are to understand all mankind of every country and religion. The particle *as* is taken in its usual signification; and means, that we should love them not in an equal degree, but in the same manner. We should testify our good will to them by acts of the same kind with those by which we shew our love for ourselves. Thus we testify our self-love by taking care of our personal ease, health, and safety. We study to procure those external accommodations which are necessary, or which it is reasonable for persons in our situation to pretend to. In like manner should we endeavour to contribute to the prosperity and happiness of all our neighbours. There are particular degrees of affection, and acts of kindness due to different descriptions of men severally; but we owe goodwill to them all; and in their several degrees of relation to us we should promote their welfare as we do our own.

A rational regard to our own interest prompts us also to improve our minds as well as to take care of our persons, to acquire the treasures of the soul as well as to

increase our fortunes. We esteem it for our advantage to be possessed of useful knowledge, and more particularly to obtain just ideas, elevated sentiments and virtuous principles of religion. Now, if we love our neighbour as ourselves, we shall be desirous of procuring the same advantages for him; we shall be willing to instruct and inform him: we shall encourage him to attend to religious duties, and behave in all respects as becomes a Christian.

Next to our personal subsistence and comfort, and the state of our minds, we are most anxious about our reputation, both on account of the temporal benefits that result from a good character, and from a delicate respect for the opinion of those about us, which we derive from nature. In like manner should we be careful of the character of our neighbour. It should be our study never to injure it ourselves either by negligence or design, nor to hear it aspersed without endeavouring to vindicate it, if we have reason to think the aspersion false; and as we should rectify mistakes to his disadvantage, and refute calumny and detraction, so we should be always ready to do justice to his good qualities. If, as is the lot of human nature, his character should be composed of virtues and vices, we must neither exaggerate nor detract from the one nor the other; but set up his virtues in extenuation of his vices. As this is all the partiality that we ought to shew to ourselves, our neighbour cannot reasonably expect more, nor should we be contented with less; for without this we cannot love him as we love ourselves.

These are the three objects which every man holds most dear, external security and comfort, the furniture of his mind, and reputation; and therefore under these heads may be classed all the positive acts of kindness due to our brethren. But it is often more necessary, as it is more difficult, to extinguish resentment than to kindle affection. While men are free from the resentful and malevolent passions, they will not greatly fail in the duties of brotherly love; but when *they* are roused, every emotion of tenderness, and every principle of justice is suppressed; and the turbid soul feels a gratification in cruelty and injustice. I shall therefore occupy the remainder of this article with some remarks on the negative part of this subject; and contenting myself with the recommendation of positive and active bene-

volence already given, point out those sentiments and practices, which defeat the amiable principles of our nature.

Resentment was implanted in the heart of man solely for the purpose of self-defence; and it is only for the obtaining of this end, that we should ever suffer it to become actively offensive. For this purpose it may sometimes be necessary to persevere until we have some reasonable security that the injury shall not be repeated: but that this indulgence of resentment should be confined within very narrow limits is clear from the strong recommendations of bearing and forbearing delivered by our Lord. It is true, that those texts, which command us to present the other cheek to the smiter, and to give our coat to him who had robbed us of our cloak, are not to be understood, at least in this era of Christ's kingdom, in the most rigorous sense; but let them be understood in the greatest latitude, that the most partial advocate for resentment can desire; and they can never be relaxed so as to warrant active retaliation, much less revenge. That we do most unwarrantably and unnecessarily transgress all reasonable bounds in gratifying our irascible propensities, is a truth which no man can deny; and to which indeed every impartial man may be cited as a witness against himself: for we not only pursue our enmity beyond the necessity of self-defence and future security, but feel a pleasure in the pursuit; and we are not content with expressing our dissatisfaction at those actions, which are done with an intention to injure us; but our resentment is inflamed by accidental and unintentional injuries. Lastly, we most absurdly and unkindly conceive resentment against those errors and crimes which are neither committed with an intention to hurt us, nor have any tendency to do so. Every loss that we sustain we consider as an intentional injury; and instead of compassion we behold wicked men with resentment; upon this point we shall chiefly dwell in the sequel.

Let us compare the precepts of our blessed Lord on this branch of our duty with the general practice of the world: "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your father, who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to shine on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on

the unjust. For, if ye love them that love you, what reward have you? Do not even the Publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? Do not even the publicans so?" Again; "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord; therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." These are the precepts, and what is the practice? Instead of loving our enemies, we often hate those who have done us no harm; far from blessing those who curse us, we often curse those who never spoke ill of us: we think it quite sufficient, if we behave kindly to our friends; and never reproach ourselves with the ill-will we bear to our enemies: and though God himself, to whom alone vengeance properly belongs, makes his sun to shine on the evil and the good, and the rain to fall on the just and on the unjust and unthankful, we who have no pretension to any such prerogative withhold, not our own bounty, but the bounty of heaven, from those who happen to incur our displeasure. Notwithstanding all our offences, our Heavenly Father continues to us his unmerited mercies; and we endeavour to withdraw them from those who have offended us! Nor are we content with resenting premeditated malice, and excusing ourselves by pleading the infirmity of human nature. We resent accidental injuries, and even triumph in retaliation; and value ourselves on revenge! We abhor, and detest, a man because he has the misfortune of being wicked; and sometimes for no other cause than because he is ignorant, or differs from us in opinion upon some favourite notion, on which we may be as erroneous as he.

How different was the conduct of Jesus! Instead of anathematizing and excommunicating Jerusalem and the other cities that rejected him, he lamented and wept over them: and when he prayed for his tormentors, he used as an argument in their favour that very ignorance which would have provoked the anger of many of his followers. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" The plea for their pardon is, that they were ignorant of Christ; they had not merely erred concerning his person, nature or dignity; some disputed point of theology, and some nice distinction in polemical divinity; but were absolutely, and indeed perversely ignorant, that Christ had come into the world at all, and that Jesus was the Messiah. This in later times would

have been a good reason for excommunicating them, depriving them of the prayers of the church, loading them with curses, and handing them over to the Civil Power or the Inquisition: but Jesus himself considered it as a reason, why his Father should forgive them. Far from cursing, he prays for them; and far from consigning them to temporal punishment or eternal damnation, he recommends them to the mercy of Heaven.

How does St. Paul speak in a similar case, and concerning the same people? "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved; for I bear them record, that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." They had by this time had a great deal of instruction bestowed upon them, and sufficient proof of the mission of Jesus to convince a candid, dispassionate mind. Paul too had as much reason to be chagrined and provoked at their perverseness, as any modern Divine can well pretend to; yet he not only prays for their salvation, but in another place professes himself willing to suffer the displeasure of God in his own person for their sakes. Such is the spirit of Christianity. Whatever judgments may be denounced by Providence, whatever restraint or severity may be necessary on the part of magistrates, in order to discourage wicked men, and protect peaceable people from their violence, it is the duty of the brethren to behold each other's ignorance, errors, vices and even crimes, with pity and commiseration.

If we esteem a well-informed and well-disposed mind the greatest blessing that can fall to our lot, we must think an ignorant mind and a vicious temper the greatest calamity that can befall us. If then this were our condition, how should we wish to be treated! I do not mean, how would a man wish to be treated after he had lost all relish for virtue; for such an one would probably wish for nothing better than the unbridled gratification of his vicious propensities; and such an inclination we should justly consider as an aggravation of his misfortune. But how, should we now, while we retain the possession of our own minds, and have a just sense of our real interest, wish to be treated, in case we should hereafter fall into such a state of depravity? Surely we should wish to be instructed in useful knowledge and true religion, and gently withdrawn from that unhappy and degraded condition: treated rather like per-

sons under the infatuation and frenzy, than as miscreants and outcasts.

This treatment we should wish for not only as more gentle and humane, but as most likely to extricate us from our miserable state. If then we love our neighbour as ourselves, we shall certainly look upon him in the same light. As to his ignorance and errors, we may fairly as well as charitably suppose, that no man is willingly either ignorant or erroneous; and therefore with respect to these points, he is certainly an object of compassion; and though he may appear to have wantonly and wilfully plunged himself into the basest vices, and even perpetrated the most atrocious villanies and cruelties, still is he an object of pity; and this in a greater degree than before, because an unprincipled mind and an unfeeling heart are greater calamities than ignorance or error. The latter are only privations of good; the the former are positive evils.

Nor is it any just cause for withholding our pity, that the person himself is insensible of his misfortune, or even thinks his state more desirable than our own. On the contrary, this perversion of understanding and moral taste should induce us to treat him with greater commiseration. What can be a more compassionate object than an idiot or a lunatic, even when he conceives himself to be the happiest of mankind? I know not whether such delusion does not move our sympathy, even more than the miserable state of the frantic maniac. Such objects are vastly more distressing to our feelings than the loudest lamentation, or even the profoundest silent sorrow.

With some such sentiments should a pious man contemplate a profligate; with that kind of pity which is above contempt and below pride; a pity that instead of contempt excites our sympathy, and instead of exultation produces sorrow and humiliation. Far from openly reviling him, loading him with opprobrious epithets, or denouncing temporal punishment, and eternal perdition, we should silently think with ourselves, "what a pity it is that a rational mind should be so ignorant of the most important truths; that a moral agent should be so insensible to the obligations of virtue; that an immortal spirit should so far forget its origin, and forfeit its high destination! Let me try to recall this poor deluded creature to truth and virtue; but if this be not in my

power let me at least mourn over his lost condition, and lament his desperate infatuation!"

If a man should injure us, we know that it would be our duty to forgive him. What pretence then can we have for hating him for actions or sentiments that do us no injury? We should lament and bewail our friends more when they commit sin than when they die; and we should speak of sinners, and to them, rather as miserable than guilty; as objects of pity than detestation. Such sentiments and demeanour as this would not only be right in itself, but also productive of very happy effects.

By it we should consult the purity, tranquillity, and serenity of our own minds. We should exchange rage and resentment for the milder affections of sorrow and commiseration. Our reluctance to contaminate our souls with sin would rather be strengthened than relaxed, and our minds would enjoy a godly calm.

With respect to sinners such behaviour to them would be more likely to make them sensible of their despicable state than any violence of language or severity of conduct. It would lead them to look into their condition more dispassionately. The effect of reproach and anger is rather to harden the offender: and if he be not in your power, he will behold you with resentment, perhaps with scorn. He will avoid your company, and seek refuge among the companions of his crimes.

This line of conduct affords the best chance of reclaiming the offender. A man, in general, feels himself more degraded and humbled by pity than reproach. He may fly to the active and boisterous passions of anger and hatred for shelter from the attacks of reproach; but cannot, with any appearance of common sense, be angry at a man for pitying him, if his pity be not intended as an insult. By the former you rouse his indignation, and excite his hostility; by commiserating his condition you leave him in a state better adapted to reflexion. By expressing resentment at his sins you not only forfeit all your influence with him, but reduce yourself at least to an equality in the contest: by looking on him with compassion you retain a superiority, and command his respect.

The harsh and austere manner of treating sinners draws a line of separation between them and the virtuous part of society, between the ignorant and the instructor, between the sinner and the preacher, between the pati-

ent and the physician. Here again the example of Jesus comes in aid of my argument. He was content to be called the friend of publicans and sinners, gluttonous and a wine-bibber, that he might be a spiritual physician to the sick, and call sinners to repentance: and St. Paul made use of every innocent compliance, that by all means, he might gain some.

By the severity with which we often censure sinners we also presume too much on our own innocence and stability. It betrays ignorance of our own offences, which taking into account our superior advantages and opportunities, may not be less criminal than theirs; and indicates a degree of security that is inconsistent with safety, and may betray us hereafter into transgressions, greater perhaps than any that provoke our censure.

Lastly, by passing severe judgment on the faults of our brethren, we usurp the prerogative of Heaven, and set at nought that solemn caution: "Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged, and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured unto you again." Though we were perfectly innocent, we have no right, in any point of view, to be severe in our judgment. Consider yourself as a servant of God and a fellow servant with the offender: and "who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Consider yourself as his Christian brother, and ask thyself "Why dost thou judge thy brother? and why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."—It is to him he is to answer for his sins, and not to you.

This circumstance should greatly add to our sympathy and pity. We should sympathize with the deluded sinner, because we are to be judged as well as he; and we should pity him on account of the judgment which he is to undergo. A dying sinner, who has forfeited all claim to happiness, who has no farther opportunity of obtaining the favour of God or making any change in his condition; but, on the contrary, may justly dread the punishments which must finally await sin, under the moral government of God, is the most pitiable object that can be presented to a reflecting mind. The feelings excited at that affecting period are inconsistent with every degree of resentment or hatred. Nothing is more afflictive and shocking. Nothing is a stronger indication of

a barbarous state of society and savage manners, than insults offered to the dying or the dead. They excite disgust in the most cruel and obdurate heart. The same feelings of sorrow and compassion should be felt at every other period; for the sinner is every day hastening to this miserable end. When we are provoked to use terms of hatred to our offending brethren, we should imagine them lying on their death-beds, bidding adieu even to those delusive pleasures in which they had indulged, resigning all those means of grace which they had neglected, and abandoning all hopes of future felicity.

On the whole, tenderness to sinners is the severest exercise, and the truest test of brotherly love. "If we love those who love us, what do we more than others; and if we salute our brethren only, what reward have we?" Or if we are kind only to the good, what do we more than gratify our most natural propensity, and indulge the most pleasing affection? But if we love those who despitefully use us; and commiserate the malicious and abandoned, then have we thoroughly subdued our resentful passions; then shall we never fail in the duties we owe to the virtuous and pious; then shall we be secure that our hearts will never reproach us: then we may indulge confidence of the love of God—who sheds his bounty on the evil and the unthankful, and reproaches none; but sent his dearly beloved son to allure sinners to repentance and salvation.

NEMO.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—The following verses on the sensibility of the vegetable tribes, are the production of a youthful member of the society for literary reading and conversation, lately instituted in this city.—They were read at a recent meeting of the society.—If you think them worthy of insertion in your valuable periodical they are at your service. I am Sir, yours truly,

A CONSTANT READER.

Dublin, April 16th, 1835.

TO THE VEGETABLE TRIBES.

Eldest born of the favor'd races
That the Spirit of Life creates and blesses;
No graceless tasks, ye flowering throng,
In the scheme of nature, to you belong.

Ye mantle our earth in a robe of green
All spangled with jewels gay ;
And she seems, thus clad, like a gorgeous queen,
That sits in her state array.
Our earth without ye, were a dreary waste,
Bleak, loveless, and unenjoyed ;
No life could rest on her barren breast,
But all would be still and void.
All breathing things that creep or fly,
Whatever their hue or form,
From the rainbow-feathered butterfly
To the toad and the sightless worm,
Wherever their fated course they wind,
In air or earth beneath,—
On ye, fair plants, for their life depend :—
Without ye, this world were death.
And shrewdly I wot, your soft forms are not
All vacant and spiritless,
But ye bear your part in the general lot
Of living joyousness.
When winter's icy spells relent,
And his wild winds fleet away,
And the cool soft showers from heaven are sent
As the dawn of a better day
On the stiff dry earth, where ye wait for your birth
In darkness and decay ;
Where the all-prolific power of heat
That quickens and re-creates,
And the vernal air with its influence sweet
The glad earth interpenetrates ;
And ye feel its vivifying breath,
And start into life and action,
As a spirit springs from the grasp of death,
Nor mourns her lost connexion
With the frame of clay, that for many a day
Bowed her pure essence beneath the sway
Of sorrow and imperfection :
As, your frames within, the young powers begin
Their living tasks to press,
'Tis a moment sure of joyance pure,
That dawn of your consciousness !
Then down ye shoot your little root,
And your infant stem above,
That with steady toil thro' the sullen soil
On its destined course doth move ;
As the eager pilgrim speeds with pain
O'er the dreary desert waste,
That he may revisit the land again
Where his hopes and his home are placed.
Oh ! when at last its labor is past,
And it rears its pale head on high,
When light and day around it glow,
And its first dark mansion it changes to

The new world of sun and sky,
Feels it not then thro' its fibres flow
A thrilling sense of joy?
How lovely it seems in its youthful pride
As its slender soft head it bends,
While the motherly root-leaf on either side
Her guardian wing extends,
Till it doffs at length in its riper strength
The aid of its early friends.
And now behold it,—it grows apace,
No toil can its efforts tire;
Good speed it makes on its joyous race,
And wider it spreads and higher.
Forth go the roots a-foraging,
Their million mouths ope wide,
And the life-sustaining store they wring
From the earth on every side;
The silvery web of tube and cell
That limpid store receives,
And aloft it mounts to feed and swell
The stem and the spreading leaves.
Now is the season of sun and shower,
When April kisses May,
And the blithe young year in her maiden hour
Is gentle and sweet and gay;
The sweet birds on every brake and tree
Tune anew their merry voices,
The glad grove rings with their melody,
And nature's face is all fresh and free,
And the heart of man rejoices.
Oh! then, ye flowers, whom earth displays
As her choicest, richest treasure,
Who crowd in such throngs on our ravished gaze
As no art nor thought can measure,
Do ye not bear your part and share
In the universal pleasure?
Yes: a sense of being, and force of mind,
Not in nerve enclosed, or brain,
Not to one favored part resigned,
But all-pervading and unconfined,
In your delicate tissues reign;
In stem, and branch, and in leaf they dwell
And glow in each fibre, and pore and cell.

Dublin, 1835.

OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER TO THE REV. ———

[THE following *Original* Epistles, may perhaps amuse some of our readers.]

REV. SIR,—Having attended the meeting held in * * * meeting at the installation of Mr. * * * as minister of the congregation belonging to the place, I take the liberty of addressing the following reflections to you as one of the ministers engaged in the public services of the day.

1. The meeting was previously published from that pulpit to commence at 12 o'clock; but it did not begin till ten minutes and a half past twelve. Now, what can we anticipate from a service commencing with a lie?

2. A considerable number of the people assembled, talking and laughing as they came, like people going to a ball or pantomime show.

3. When you appeared in the pulpit, you manifested no appearance of addressing God for his accompanying presence.

4. Had no person in the house any thing to praise God for, unless the choir in the gallery?

5. How inconsistent was it to read out for singing,

Jesus, my Lord, I own his name :

His name is all my boast !

Jesus, my Lord ; and Jesus a created Being ! His name is all my boast : all my boast is the name of one of God's creatures ! Is not this idolatry ? Is it not robbing God of his glory and transferring it to a creature ?

6. You read a chapter of Scripture ; but your sermon was neither Law nor Gospel. Was there any thing in it calculated to save the souls of your hearers ? Did you mention the name of Jesus Christ in it at all ? What were the duties which you set before the young minister about to be installed ? Why they were two : (1.) to cultivate his mind, and (2.) to guard against the trammels of Popery and Episcopalianism. And the Law and the Gospel, Christ and his doctrine, death and eternity, repentance, faith, conversion, heaven and hell were all avoided as either dangerous or useless.

7. You profess to be a minister of Jesus Christ, Did ever Jesus Christ preach in a gown ?

8. Did Jesus Christ when he ascended the pulpit in Nazareth, throw the bible behind him; and lay down as preferable a human production in manuscript? Yet you impugned Papists and Protestants for adhering to human inventions and rejecting the Bible: you who were guilty of the very same error before their eyes! Let your face burn to a cinder with shame for such preposterous inconsistency.

9. Your successor employed the greatest part of his time in eulogizing the minister and the congregation. Was it not imprudent and dangerous to pour so much luscious poison into the young man's ears? Not a word dropped in reproof of sin: not one single sin specified, unless it be the sin which you were guilty of yourself; viz., rejecting the sacred word of God.

10. Did Jesus Christ and his twelve apostles, after he had ordained them, meet at the head inn of Jerusalem; and spend the evening in rioting and fleshly indulgence, without having even the form of godliness? No, Jesus Christ and his Apostles would have been ashamed of such conduct.

And now, my good friend, read this letter carefully: and take these friendly suggestions into your serious deliberation; and if you are ever called on to officiate upon such an occasion again, as you shall answer at the judgment-seat of God, take another course. Deal faithfully with the minister and the people's souls. Dilate on something useful. Cause all the congregation to praise God. Do not throw the Bible behind you. Do not keep your eye upon a scrap of paper, like a crow picking corn. Do not repair to the head inns, &c. &c. &c. The Lord bless these suggestions to your Salvation.

Yours, &c.,

AMEN.

REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

[The following reply has been prepared by the person to whom the preceding letter was addressed: and would have been transmitted to AMEN by post, but for the reason stated in the first paragraph.]

TO MR. AMEN.

DEAR SIR,—Being ignorant of the address of the parish clerk at * * *, I am compelled to take this public mode of replying to your letter: and shall answer the suggestions you have thrown out in their order.

1. The meeting began as soon as was found practicable after the time announced. This may have been a few minutes later than was expected; but you must on reconsideration feel that to call this discrepancy, *a lie*, is to use by far too harsh a term: and it is hoped you will be sorry for having done so.

2. The people seemed to me orderly, attentive, and well-behaved: certainly there was no appearance of gloom: nor did the occasion call for it. It was rather a time of thankfulness and congratulation. Had any symptoms of levity appeared, they would have been immediately repressed.

3. In the pulpit, I made no parade of my private devotions. Such a display has always seemed to me too nearly allied to hypocrisy. See Matt. vi. 5. 6. where you will find my reason for avoiding the practice which you recommend.*

4. The singing of God's praise in a becoming manner is a devotional exercise too much neglected in, perhaps, *every* congregation: and you are right in pointing out the impropriety of those members, who, though capable of joining in the song of thankfulness, leave that part of the service to professional performers. It is a practice which I have never approved nor countenanced; and shall not defend.

5. I humbly conceive, that the hymn on which you animadvert, is not idolatrous. Christians who own their Lord, as the son, the sent and the well-beloved of God, may surely be allowed to glory in the name of their illustrious leader and high-priest, and to boast of his profession, without incurring so severe an imputation. Still, if you are of a different impression, it will be well for you to abstain from joining in that or any other sacred hymn expressing the same ideas.

6. The sermon contained a statement of some points on which the persons who were addressed, differ from their fellow-christians of other denominations. The occasion seemed a suitable one for bringing such topics forward; and I do not think any one could be found

* And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy father, who is in secret.

more convenient for the purpose. The name of Christ occurred no less than *six* times in the discourse: but if it had been entirely absent, I might refer you for an example of a similar omission, to the *Sermon on the Mount*: in which that name is not to be found. You admit that the hearers were warned respecting the duty of avoiding the trammels of Popery and Prelacy: and surely if you had reflected upon the prominence given to such topics by our illustrious ancestors, and upon their peculiar applicability to the present times, when Presbyterianism seems about to be sacrificed by her own official champions, at the shrine of Episcopacy, you would have spared your censure of the discourse. It was at least calculated to save christians from the sinfulness of Making God's word of none effect by human traditions and impositions.

7. You ask me, did ever Jesus Christ wear a gown? I answer with great sincerity, that I cannot tell; but I rather think he did; seeing that it was a common article of dress in his age and country. Allow me to ask you in return, Do we read of Jesus Christ wearing a swallow-tailed coat of superfine black,—with a neck-cloth, shoes, and knee-buckles? These are habiliments which I believe nobody ever supposed our Saviour employed: and yet I never heard of any minister being once censured for appearing in the pulpit, so arrayed. To return, however, to the gown. There is strong scriptural evidence for believing that the Apostle Paul wore such a vestment: for he instructs a friend to send one after him which he had left behind him by mistake, or perhaps lent to a brother minister. See 2 Tim. iv. 13.* The *cloak* there mentioned is undoubtedly the *pænula*: a loose hanging robe with wide sleeves, exactly resembling the academic gown at present worn by ministers.

8. Whether Jesus Christ threw the Bible behind him, when he ascended the pulpit in Nazareth, I cannot tell; not knowing whether he ever ascended a pulpit in Nazareth; or whether there was in Nazareth a pulpit for him to ascend; but I know that upon one occasion when he preached in the place of worship in that city, he did not commence his discourse until he had *shut* the sacred volume, and had *sent it away*, returning it to the person

* The cloak, (or gown,) that I left at Troas, with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee.

by whom it had been handed to him. See Luke iv. 20.* If therefore my closing the Bible, and depositing it in a different part of the pulpit, be considered a rejection of the word of God, how can our Lord be defended from the same accusation? Learn, Sir, from these examples not to be hasty in censuring customs which are not familiar to you; and which for that reason only you dislike; and above all, not to be forward in throwing out such abominable accusations as those contained in your letter, against persons, who are guiltless of any intentional offence. Your imputations may fly farther than you intend. In this instance, an unfounded and uncharitable censure aimed at a person to whom you have taken an unprovoked dislike, has alighted upon the head of your Lord and master, whose name you have so irreverently introduced, while indulging feelings the very opposite of those enjoined in his Gospel. I humbly conceive that if any countenance ought to be suffused with the blush of shame on account of this charge, it is your own; for it evinces only an ignorant and uncharitable mind.

9. My successor spoke in just and measured terms of the characters both of the minister and people of the congregation: his address was powerful, persuasive, practical and evangelical: and the man who can express himself in the terms in which you speak of that discourse must possess what I trust is a very singular temper.

10. You ask whether Jesus Christ and his twelve apostles, after he had ordained them, met at the head inn of Jerusalem to spend the evening. Now, Sir, if you had once read the New Testament, you would have known that it was impossible for him to do so; because not one of them was called or appointed to his office in Jerusalem; but in Galilee: a district lying at the distance of not less than fifty miles from that city. Whether he did or not attend at a public entertainment on each occasion of his inviting a person to become one of the twelve, we are not informed; and possibly, upon some of these occasions he did not. But on one such occasion, at least, we are expressly informed that he did: and I am surprised that you should be ignorant of a

*And he closed the book, and gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And he began to say unto them, this day is this scripture fulfilled, in your ears.

circumstance so fully described in the evangelic narrative. If you refer to Luke v. 27—30, you will find that our Lord saw Levi, (better known as Matthew the Evangelist,) sitting at the receipt of custom;—"and he said unto him, '*Follow me*'; and he left all, and rose up and followed him. *And Levi made him A GREAT FEAST in his house; and there was A GREAT COMPANY of publicans and of others that sat down with them. BUT THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES MURMURED*"—I cannot help thinking that if you had lived in the neighbourhood, you would have taken part with these sanctimonious grumblers. Jesus, however, notwithstanding their displeasure, was not at all "*ashamed of such conduct*;" for he justified it in a convincing argument, which you will find recorded in the same chapter; and which I would recommend to your attentive perusal.

And now, Sir, as you have given me some practical admonitions, allow me to conclude with a word of advice. Do not go to a place of worship for the purpose of cavilling and finding fault. Do not bring forward false accusations. Do not censure what you do not understand. Read your bible with some tolerable degree of attention; and endeavour, by purifying your own heart from its corruptions and vices, to secure your own salvation, before you undertake the task of "reproving" others with a view to theirs. If you act thus in future, you will become a wiser and a better man. Had you acted thus hitherto, you would have saved some trouble both to yourself and

Your humble Servant,

* * *

ANECDOTE.

"A Gentleman well known to the writer, travelling in the back settlements of America, stopped in a small town where a house for refreshment was kept by a native American. He found a black woman sitting in the bar, who on his entering laid down a book she had been reading, and came to serve him. Curiosity induced him to take up the book, which he found was the New Testament. What! said he, can you read that book? She replied, she could, and was very fond of reading it. They conversed about it for some time; and she made

this observation. "They have always told me that I must worship three Gods—that there are three spoken of in this book; but I have never been able to find more than one Being that is to be worshipped, and he is called, our Father." She appeared delighted when she was told that there were many Christians who worshipped none but the Father."—*Worsley's Lectures*, page 394.

ON OATHS.

(*From a Correspondent.*)

THE writer is induced to believe, from several circumstances, that there are many persons who conscientiously object to an oath. He wishes to suggest to them the propriety of making known their views by Petitions to the Legislature for relief. An act was passed in the last session but one, which exempted the sect called Separatists from the necessity of taking oaths in the customary form: and there is evidently a disposition in Parliament, to attend to the scruples of the conscientious. The petitioners, should, he thinks, apply for an act, declaring, that all persons who express a conscientious objection to an oath may be allowed (in every case where an oath is now required by law), to make a solemn affirmation or declaration in the following form, which is the same as that permitted to the Quakers by 8 George I. cap. 6.—"I, A B, do *solemnly, sincerely, and truly* declare and affirm."—All persons making a false affirmation to be subject to the same penalties and forfeitures, as are enacted against persons convicted of perjury. In the form prescribed by the Act of the Session of Parliament preceding the last, (Cap. 82, pages 1069, 1070) the Supreme Being is mentioned; in that relieving the Quakers, there is no such appeal. This is an important difference in the writer's view, which has induced him to give the form permitted to the Quakers. His object in calling attention to the subject is, that the conscientious may be relieved.

OBITUARY.

On the 31st of March, 1835, SAMUEL NAPIER, Esq. of Belfast, aged 35 years. The amiableness of his disposition, the excellence of his principles, and the solid worth of his character, had attached to Mr. Napier, a numerous body of friends, by strong ties of affection. He was carried off by a lingering disease, the fatal termination of which he foresaw almost from the commencement; but which he sustained with unshaken fortitude and resignation. He

was in his religious opinions a Unitarian Christian; and evidenced in his last moments, the efficacy of his faith, to support, console and cheer; as he had, through life, adorned it by his walk and conversation. The sympathy which was felt for Mr. Napier was deep and general; and the respect in which he was held was attested by the unusually large attendance at his funeral, and by the sincere regrets of his numerous acquaintance.

Died,—at Strabane, on the 1st of March, 1855, WILLIAM ORR, Esq. aged 50 years. In him the town of Strabane has lost one of its most worthy and influential citizens:—the poor, one of their most kind and generous friends;—civil liberty, one of its warmest and most uncompromising advocates;—and religious truth, one of its most zealous and enlightened supporters. Possessed of an ample fortune, he enjoyed the means of carrying his benevolent purposes extensively into effect; and his heart took pleasure in the indulgence of its kindly affections. Mr. Orr was for several years an Elder of the Presbyterian Congregation of Strabane, having been elected to the office during his absence on a visit to England, and having officiated in that capacity, along with his venerable father: the only instance, it is believed, which the records of that congregation present of a father and son being thus honourably associated in the Eldership.

He frequently represented the Congregation, in the General Synod of Ulster; where his votes were always given on the side of charity, liberality and peace. He also, for many years, acted in the capacity of Treasurer of the Congregation. At the last meeting of the General Synod of Ulster, in Derry, he attended as Elder from Strabane Congregation, and gave his voice in favour of the National System of Education; as he had previously informed the Congregation that he would, if chosen to that duty. Soon after, he was brought before the Session, and afterwards before the Presbytery of Strabane, by his minister, the Rev. Alexander Goudy, (grandson to the Rev. James Porter, of Grey-abbey,) on account of his having invited the Rev. Dr. Montgomery to preach in the Market-house of the town. The Presbytery, however, declined to pronounce any censure upon Mr. Orr; and he soon after resigned the Eldership, in which he could no longer act with comfort to himself. His resignation excited sincere regret among the members of the congregation. Mr. Orr was universally esteemed and respected by all who knew him; and his memory will long be cherished by his more intimate friends. He has left behind him a numerous family: may they emulate their father's virtues!

Died, April 15th 1855, aged 80, HENRY JOY, Esq.

A particular account of the early life of this excellent man would be incompatible with an obituary in a religious periodical, and ill accord with his unassuming and unobtrusive character; but the remoteness of the facts, and the length of time since he withdrew from the view of society, require a brief and general notice, which may revive the recollection of his cotemporaries, and furnish information to the present generation.

During the lives of Henry and Robert Joy, his uncle and father, he was entrusted with the conduct of the Belfast News-Letter, and after the decease of his father he became sole editor and proprietor. This office he filled throughout the most tempestuous period in modern history, or perhaps in the history of the world, and certainly the most perplexing in the annals of this province. It included the American Revolution, with the French and Spanish wars; the era of the Irish Volunteers; the struggles for freedom of trade and legislative independence between the parliaments of England and Ireland; the French Revolution and the succeeding wars; the troubles that closed the last century, and the union of Great Britain and Ireland with which the present commenced.

During the earlier events of this period the News-Letter was the only periodical in Ulster. This circumstance, with the character of the times, placed the editor in a peculiar situation, and he will be allowed to have filled it with singular ability, prudence and independence. In the course of these events he was the author of many measures and plans, the reputation of which he yielded to others who had it more in their power to carry them into execution. For a long series of years this journal was powerfully instrumental in guiding, enlightening, and refining the public mind; never lending an ear to personal calumny, nor fomenting private feuds; always discouraging illiberal and uncharitable antipathies in politics and religion, and abounding in lessons of pure morals and elegant taste.

Finding that the vexatious and tyrannical prosecutions of the press, and the ensnaring excise laws affecting the paper manufacture, rendered his continuance in business equally inconsistent with safety and conscience, he withdrew into retirement to enjoy an independent fortune, and to indulge that elegant taste for the fine arts, which he derived from nature. His favourite studies were the old English writers, and particularly Shakespeare and Milton. He took delight in simple and especially sacred music, and in paintings and engravings by the most celebrated masters and artists. In these studies he persevered to the latest period of his life.*

His moral and religious character is better adapted to the nature of this publication, but to do it justice would require more space than it can afford. His principles on civil and religious liberty were enlarged, decided, and strictly constitutional; his prepossessions and feelings on political subjects were under the direction of an understanding singularly correct. He possessed a mind susceptible of the most honourable and delicate impressions, and a peculiar sensibility of conscience. His disposition was modest and retiring, but firm and independent. Though his temper was mild, he was often roused to express his indignation at what appeared to him contrary to honour or truth. He was cautious in forming his opinions and naturally disposed to waver; but when once convinced, he was sometimes inclined to retain his convictions with undue tenacity. In private life he was uniformly governed by principle and affection—

*Beside his contributions to the News-Letter, and his discourses read to the Belfast Literary Society, he was the author of a learned dissertation on the Irish Harp, prefixed to Bunting's Irish music. *Thoughts on the British Constitution* was the joint composition of Mr. Joy and the writer of this article.

principles the most upright and amiable, and affections constant and ardent for his friends and all his family connexions, even the most remote.

His heart was deeply imbued with piety; and he never alluded to the nature or name of the Divine Being without evident marks of reverential awe; nor ever spoke of His works without raising his thoughts to their Creator. Being deprived, in his childhood, of a pious mother, he was left to form his own religious opinions; this he did by diligent enquiry and conversation, and at an early age, feeling some scruples concerning the worship on which his father attended, he quietly withdrew to a society whose principles were more congenial to his own.* This change took place without any blame or remark from that excellent parent.

Thus his opinions were of his own forming, and he watched over them as a prudent father watches over the mind of his child. He was fearful they might go astray, feelingly alive to every objection or text that seemed to affect their truth, and equally anxious to correct or to confirm them. His opinions having been impartially formed, frequently revised, and established on the firmest grounds, were corrected by an habitual perusal of the sacred writings, and steadily adhered to, even to the last. He accordingly assured a friend, shortly before his last illness, "that he had that day carefully perused his religious opinions, which very many years ago he had, after diligent reading, committed to paper; and he was very happy to say, he had not a wish to change one iota of what he had written; and so far from that, he was more than ever convinced of their being the doctrines taught by his Saviour." These were nearly his own words, and he uttered them with unusual energy, warmth, and decision, and seemed to draw great comfort from this revision of his religious views. They were liberal, philanthropical, and truly evangelical.

Φειν τ' ἀνδρος ἀγαθου!

For the latter half of his life he was an Elder of the First Presbyterian Congregation, of Belfast.

On Thursday morning, the 16th ultimo, after about an hour's illness, in the 80th year of her age, at the house of her son-in-law, the Rev. F. Blakely, of Moneyrea, SARAH, relict of the late DAVID LINDSAY, Esq. of Tullyhenan, Banbridge. Truly pious in her religious conduct, she was utterly free from narrow or sectarian views, and looked on power, whether vested in the hands of priests or politicians, as only to be exercised for the good of mankind. She was very familiar with ancient and modern history, and always manifested disapprobation in hearing any thing in support of superstitious opinions. In her religious principles she was a calm and decided Unitarian, and dwelt with delight upon the recollection, that such were the principles in which she was brought up by her father, and confirmed by her husband. Her father was the ancestor of the Mulligans, of Parkmount, on the banks of the upper Bann.

*Ample materials for this inquiry were furnished at that time by Archdeacon Blackburn and the authors of the *Free and Candid Disquisitions*, within the body of the church; and of Theophilus Lindsey and his followers, who resigned their preferments in the church, and their situations in the Universities from motives of Conscience.

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Vol. VI.

TRUTH.

TRUTH does not depend on the will of man. We cannot make or believe any thing to be true or false at pleasure. We must refer every opinion to some standard established by nature; and when they agree, we say, that the opinion is true. The standard of natural truth is the material world, perceived by our senses; and of moral truth, the principles of conscience. The standard of science is those first principles of reasoning, of which every man feels an irresistible conviction; and the standard of human conduct, the fundamental principles of human nature. The only standard of divine truth, is the Holy Scriptures.

When our opinions can be applied to the standard, then there is certainty; as great, as when we apply a line to a material substance: when this cannot be done, we can have only probability of their truth or falsehood. When the opinions are of such a nature, that all men can readily compare them with their proper standards, as justice and mercy with the dictates of conscience, then we may expect uniformity; when this cannot be done by all men with ease, we shall meet with variety. This is often the case with the doctrines of religion, and whenever there is room for variety, it will appear, because prejudice or passion, incapacity or precipitation will operate; and these will operate in proportion to the degree, in which our wishes or our fears, our pride or obstinacy are interested; and consequently, according to our ideas of the importance and the consequences of the proposition.

Thus there may be truth without certainty. We may be right without being sure that we are. The standard may not be accessible, or it may be mistaken. We may neglect to apply it, or may not clearly perceive the relation between it and our opinions. We then judge by guess, as we do of length or breadth, when we have no measure.

In religion, the standard of truth is not of a material nature, like a rule and line ; nor are our first principles as clearly defined as mathematical axioms, such as two and two make four : nor can we prove every thing by the testimony of our sense, as in experimental philosophy. The nature of moral and religious knowledge, will not admit of this, and the language of Scripture may be misinterpreted, through ignorance or prejudice. Hence it proceeds, that there is room for variety of opinions ; and for the reason already assigned, there will always exist a diversity of sentiment. The moral consequence of this is, that we should use great discretion in forming our own opinions, and great candour in judging of the sentiments of others. In practical religion, there are nevertheless fixed principles, as well as in natural philosophy : and in theology, or speculative religion, the rules of reasoning are the same as on other speculative subjects. From these we should be careful never to depart. In particular, we should reduce all our opinions on moral subjects, including the moral character of God, to those first principles which he has implanted in the heart of man for this very purpose. Our standards in doctrinal religion, are the principles and rules of right reason, and the word of God. Neither of these should we ever abandon, but apply the one to the other, and our opinions to both, without suffering the intervention of those prejudices and passions, or partialities and prepossessions, which are the chief causes of error.

We are not to consider ourselves as secure from error, because our prejudices and prepossessions are of an innocent nature ; for though our mistakes will in this case be more harmless, we may still err. Those philosophers who employed themselves in investigating the causes of natural events, and the course of nature, were prevented for many ages from making much progress in science, by a very innocent error. From a superficial view of things, they formed an hypothesis or conjecture of the causes of the different appearances in nature, and then looked out for proofs of their own suppositions. The great progress that has been made in these latter days, in studying the works of God, has been owing to a change in this practice. They now, for the most part, observe the appearances first, and this with great diligence ; and then by putting their

observations together, the real cause appears of itself. The same error has been fallen into by divines, but their error has not yet been thoroughly corrected. They take up certain opinions at random, or from authority, or under the influence of some prejudice or passion; and then they make all their reasonings, and their interpretations of scripture conform to these preconceived notions. Thus, instead of adjusting their opinions to their proper standards, they warp, contract, or extend the standard, that is, the word of God, till it fits their opinions. In the common affairs of life, if a man were to make use of fraudulent measures of capacity or length, it would be to impose upon others; but philosophers and divines often corrupt the standards of truth, to impose upon themselves, and flatter some favourite prepossession, or to gain some selfish, mercenary, or ambitious end.

These prepossessions are sometimes in favour of the prevailing doctrines, sometimes in opposition to them; and not unfrequently the object is to leave every principle in a state of doubt. Those, who are unreasonably positive in maintaining any doctrine, or the contrary of it, are called dogmatists, or bigots; and those who question the certainty of every doctrine, are stiled sceptics. Between these the world is divided, though not in equal proportions: for the generality of men take more pleasure in assurance, even in the wrong, than in doubt. Both of these extremes are to be carefully avoided; and to guard the reader against them, shall be my object in the sequel of this paper.

The generality of christians are of a dogmatical temper. They have been diligently instructed in religion out of certain books, that inculcate some favourite system of doctrine; and the doctrines which they contain, are supported by texts, which are considered as conclusive proofs. These tenets and these interpretations of scripture, they maintain with the same zeal and firmness, as if they were all equally certain, and equally important. The consequence of this plan of instruction is, that they contract a gloomy, dogmatical, and illiberal turn of mind themselves, form unworthy conceptions of the dispensation of grace, and indulge in uncharitable opinions concerning their brethren. As they conceive that their tenets are essential and fundamental, they can hardly form good hopes of those who

reject them, or acknowledge them to be christians, and often frankly confess, that they do not.

The fundamental principles of christianity are few in number, as appears by the simplicity of the terms, on which the primitive disciples were admitted to baptism; and we should be on our guard not to add our own peculiar opinions to the number. Our faith in those doctrines which were considered as fundamental by our Lord and his apostles, such as the divine mission of Christ, the necessity of faith and repentance, the doctrine of immortality, and his resurrection from the dead, we should hold fast without wavering. Without adhering to them we cannot be christians; and while we are christians, we should reflect on them with reverence, cherish them as sacred pledges of the love of God, of the grace of the Lord Jesus, and of our own precious and immortal hopes. It is not wise in the generality of the disciples, to suffer the delicacy and solemnity of their feelings on these solemn and interesting topics, to be polluted by making them subjects of disputation. Nor do I, in any case, recommend a controversial turn of mind, nor a habit of disputing about religion; and least of all, on fundamental principles. On other points, we should keep our minds open, so as to avail ourselves of the light that may be thrown on scripture by learned and pious men of different persuasions, to entertain favourable opinions of the intentions and prospects of those who differ from us, and to embrace in the arms of charity, all whom Christ does not exclude from the limits of his church. When they become the subject of serious and edifying conversation, we should candidly acknowledge our diffidence and doubts where we entertain them, express a willingness to receive further information, and on due consideration, avow a change of sentiment. This would preserve us from the bitterness and acrimony, which generally characterize those, who obstinately adhere to what they are unable to defend, and the keen resentment, which they harbour against those, whom they cannot confute. It would also mitigate and repress the insolence of the victorious disputant. Both parties would be inclined to make concession, and they would gradually approximate each other, till they met in the middle point of truth, and added to their faith, brotherly kindness and charity. At present, not only divines, but

laymen also, seldom condescend to say, I incline to such a doctrine ; but I know, there is much to be said against it, and I should be glad of an opportunity of seeing it ably discussed : or, I am at a loss what meaning to put upon such a text of scripture. A professional man may be excused for declining to show his candour at the expense of his learning ; but there is no such apology for the dogmatical obstinacy of one, from whom much learning on such points cannot be reasonably expected, and who is under no inducement to make theological knowledge his point of honour. But, in fact, the most learned divine, if he is frank and candid, will confess, that there are many points, on which he cannot make up his mind, many texts of doubtful interpretation, and some the depth of which he cannot fathom ; and, as these knotty questions do not relate to fundamentals, no man needs to be ashamed of such a confession. Such an acknowledgment, would conduce more both to personal and general edification, than those absurd pretences to infallibility, which we may meet in every religious society, and even in every company, where religious controversy is made the topic of conversation.

It is a common error to consider all truths as of equal importance, and to contend for them all alike. With this error all men are chargeable, but chiefly the young. They very laudably make it a point of conscience or honour, to support the truth at all hazards ; but very absurdly display the same zeal, whether they argue for the great truths of religion, virtue and liberty, or for some insignificant article of news. They generally persuade themselves that they are acting from principle, though they are more generally influenced by vanity, and a spirit of contention. These motives are always blameable, because they always violate the harmony of social intercourse. It therefore becomes us to consider, whether the point we insist upon, is of equal consequence with the prevalence of good humour, good nature, and affection among friends. If not, it should either be dropped, or discussed like any other trifling and indifferent subject. This contentious turn is the mark of a vain, irritable, and narrow mind, and it generally indicates vulgarity. Persons that live in more polished society, acquire a habit of carrying off such little differences with politeness and good humour, and maintain their opinions, even on important and inter-

esting questions, with more temper, though with equal firmness.

Now as in doctrinal religion, as well as the affairs of this world, there are many questions of inferior importance, and some curious points of no importance at all to us ; we should learn to converse upon them, with the same liberality and mutual indulgence, that we so much approve of in treating of subjects of moral conduct or civil polity ; and in all cases of doubtful disputation, we should frankly acknowledge our difficulties and doubts, and not pretend to greater certainty than we really feel.

As the dogmatist adopts opinions upon slight grounds, and adheres to them without reason, so the sceptic, on the other hand, rejects truth on slight grounds, and is continually wavering. As there is only one path that leads to truth, and a thousand, to error ; it is a thousand to one, that the dogmatical christian will be wrong on controverted points ; and if so, he will be in an error all his life, for it is not his nature to change. Again, as the sceptic is always doubting, he can never have any firm hold of truth ; or, if ever, only for a short time. Neither of them, therefore, can derive any real benefit from their religious speculations. The infidel is worse than either, because he neither is, nor ever can be right. The only line of conduct, then, that is worthy of a wise and good man, is, after being well grounded in fundamental principles, to maintain a fair and candid state of mind, as to other points ; always willing to receive information, and to consider arguments, though not prone to change ; regarding all his religious sentiments with reverence, though not superstitiously afraid of examining the grounds of his belief ; conceding to others the liberty, that he claims for himself ; and thanking instead of reviling those who assist him in correcting his errors. NEMO.

ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF DEATH.

(Concluded from p. 172.)

Again ; death is the separation of friends. And we are not of those, who can speak lightly of this separation. We have heard of some who were able to lift up a radiant and almost smiling countenance over the earthly remains of all that was dearest on earth ; but it enters

not into our conception to regard it as anything but extravagance and enthusiasm. We do not take upon us to set limits to the support which God may give to bereaved friendship or afflicted piety ; but that triumph in the countenance, surely, is not their fit demeanour. No ; the sundering stroke of death is stern, and cold, and bitter reality.

We have sometimes ventured to wonder, and that in the more fervent meditation upon God's goodness, why the trial is made so severe, and, for a time, so almost inconsolable. Could one glimpse, we have been ready to say, could one glimpse of the future world be opened to us, could the situation of the departed, for one moment, be made known to us ; or might it have been the order of Providence that families should be removed at once and together to the ' spirit land '—but reflection and faith have soon arisen to check the remonstrances and questionings of anxious and yearning affection, and have soon shown, as they usually do, that God's Providence is wiser than our own hasty presumption. Were families removed together, how certainly would our social affections gather up and concentrate themselves upon those narrow circles, and all the evils—the peculiarities, the prejudices, the selfish and peculiar attachments—of that limited intercourse, to which we are already sufficiently liable, would be inflicted on society ; and all the benefits of a wide and generous diffusion and reciprocation of sentiments and feelings, would be cut off from the social body. If, again, the future world were opened to us, it might produce in us an utter distaste to this ; it might disturb the well balanced and wisely ordered influences, under which we were made to act in the present state. If we could see, what we so ardently long to behold, beyond this veil of earthly shadows, we might have no eyes for the scene around us ; we might be rapt in meditation, when we are called to the action and trial of all our virtues.

It was evidently designed, that we should be trained up here, by a severe and lofty discipline, for some glorious state of being and enjoyment hereafter. The moral economy under which we are placed, the spiritual life on earth, was not designed to be vision, but faith—not rapture, but trial. The departure of friends and kindred to another world irresistibly draws our thoughts thither, and constantly renders us more indifferent to

acquisitions and objects here. Heaven claims our treasures, that our hearts may be there also. Faith, moreover, in the invisible, the spiritual, the eternal, is the appropriate faith of beings whose welfare lies in the invisible mind, whose nature is spiritual, and whose destiny, immortal. It is meet that we should be trained by the influences of a world which we see not, and from which no sound reaches us. It is our happiness, also, not only to love God, but to love him with the fervour and assurance of perfect trust. Love is ever doubtful, without that trial; and it is but an impassioned feeling, without that quality of absolute confidence.

Yet a little while therefore are we required to wait, till we can behold those objects and those beings, on whom, next to God, it is right that our hearts should be set. The interval will not be too long for the trial of our faith, and the preparation of all our virtues; not too long to prepare us for the blessedness of a future life; nay, it may not be found too long to prepare us *to die*, as the Christian should die. To meet the last hour calmly, to resign all the objects which our senses have made familiar and dear, in the lofty expectation of better things for the mind, is itself a great act of faith, and one for which many days' reflection and experience may not be too much to prepare us. To take our last look at the countenances of beloved friends and companions; to close our eyes to the bright vision of nature; to bid adieu to earth, sky, waters; to feel, for the last time, the thrill of rapture with which this fair and glorious scene of things has so often touched the soul—this is an hour for faith unshaken in the immortality of virtue, and for trust unbounded in the love of God, and for the triumphant assurance which long tried and lofty experience alone can give. The feelings of the infidel Rousseau have seemed to us thus far natural, and such as even a Christian may entertain. When he apprehended that his last hour drew near, he desired the windows of his apartment to be opened, that he might 'have the pleasure,' as he said, 'of beholding nature once more. How lovely she is!' he exclaimed; 'how pure and serene is the day! O Nature! thou art grand indeed!'^{*} Yet not as Rousseau died, does the Christian die; but with a better trust.

And with that trust, with a firm confidence in the perpetuity of all pious and virtuous friendships, there is much, surely, to mitigate the pain of a temporary separation. Let us remember, too, that we do submit to frequent separations in this life, that our friends wander from us over trackless water and to far distant continents, and that we are still happy in the assurance that they live. And though, by the same providence of God that has guarded them here, they are called to pass beyond the visible precincts of this present existence, let us feel that they still live. God's universe is not explored, when we have surveyed islands, and oceans, and the shores of earth's spreading continents. There are other regions, where the footsteps of the happy and immortal are treading the paths of life. Would we call them back to these abodes of infirmity and sin? Would we involve them again in these toils, and pains, and temptations? Or shall we sorrow for them, as those who have no hope? No; we would rather go, and die with them. What do we say? We will rather go, and live with them for ever!

But the awful entrance to the world of spirits—may still be our exclamation—how dark and desolate is that passage! It is a fearful thing to die. Nature abhors dissolution!

Let something of this be admitted, but let it not be too much. Does nature abhor dissolution? Behold the signs of decay and dissolution which every Autumn spreads around us. Behold nature in her annual death—the precursor of renovated life. But we will not argue from emblems. We will admit that a living being must naturally dread to part with life. But he dreads to part with life only, in a greater measure, as he dreads to part with every thing that is his. He is averse to the loss of property, and in some instances almost as much so, as to the loss of life itself. He is reluctant to part with any one of his senses; and this reluctance, compared with the natural dread of death, is in full proportion to the value of that organ. Let us rationally look at the subject in this light. Doubtless we dread the loss of the sense of hearing, for instance; and, when that is entirely gone from us, hearing is dead. We dread the loss of sight; and that light extinguished, seeing is dead. Thus one faculty after another departs from us, and death is at work within us, while we say that we

are in the midst of life. So let us regard it. So let us familiarize to our minds the thoughts of death, and feel that this dreaded enemy, dreaded, partly, because imagined to be so distant and unknown, has already made its lodgement in our frame, and, by familiar processes, is approaching the citadel of life. As the disease is making its inroad upon us and the system is wearing out, as the acuteness of sensation is failing us and the vigour of bone and muscle is declining, let us say and feel, that we are gradually approaching the extinction of this animal life. Let no skeptic doubts, let no thoughts of annihilation mingle with our apprehensions of mortality; let us believe as Christians, that not the soul, but only the body dies—and death cannot be that dread and abhorrence of nature which we make it.

We fear that we have occasion to crave the patience of our readers for the length to which our discussion has run; but we would dwell upon this point a moment longer—the natural dread of death. It seems to us strange, it seems as if all were wrong in a world, where, from the very constitution of things, death must close every scene of human life, where it has reigned for ages over all generations, where the very air we breathe and the dust we tread upon was once animated life. It seems to us most strange and wrong, that this most common, necessary expedient, and certain of all events, should bring such horror and desolation with it; that it should bring such tremendous agitation, as if it were some awful and unprecedented phenomenon; that it should be more than death—a shock, a catastrophe, a convulsion; as if nature, instead of holding on its steady course, were falling into irretrievable ruins.

And that which is strange, is our strangeness to this event. Call sickness, we repeat, call pain, an approach to death. Call the weariness and failure of the limbs and senses, call decay, a dying. It is so; it is a gradual loosening of the cords of life, and a breaking of its reservoirs and resources. So shall they all, one and another in succession, give way. ‘I feel’—will the thoughtful man say—‘I feel the pang of suffering, as it were, piercing and cutting asunder, one by one, the fine and invisible bonds that hold me to the earth. I feel the gushing current of life within me to be wearing away its own channels. I feel the sharpness of every keen emotion and of every acute and far-penetrating

thought, as if it were shortening the moments of the soul's connexion and conflict with the body.' So it is, and so shall it be, till at last, 'the silver cord is loosened, and the golden bowl is broken at the fountain, and the wheel is broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns unto God who gave it.' No; it is not a strange dispensation. Death is the fellow of all that is earthly; the friend of man alone. It is not an anomaly; it is not a monster in the creation. It is the law, and the lot of nature.

'Not to thy eternal resting-place,
Shalt thou retire alone. * * * *

Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world, with kings,
The powerful of the earth, the wise and good,
Fair forms and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun; the vales,
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods, rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks,
That make the meadows green, and poured round all,
Old ocean's grey and melancholy waste—
Are but the solemn decorations all,
Of the great tomb of man.'

But of what is it the tomb? Does the spirit die? Do the blessed affections of the soul, go down into the dark and silent grave? Oh! no. 'The narrow house, and pall, and breathless darkness, and funeral train—these belong not to the soul. They proclaim only the body's dissolution. They but celebrate the vanishing away of the shadow of existence. Man does not die, though the forms of popular speech thus announce his exit. He does not die. We bury, not our friend, but only the form, the vehicle in which, for a time, our friend lived. That cold, impassive clay is not the friend, the parent, the child, the companion, the cherished being. No, it is not: blessed be God, that we can say, *It is not!* It is the material world only that earth claims. It is 'dust' only that 'descends to dust.' The grave!—let us break its awful spell, its dread dominion. It is the place where man lays down his weakness, his infirmity, his diseases and sorrows, that he may rise up to a new and glorious life. It is the place, where man ceases—in all that is frail and decaying—ceases to be man, that he may be, in glory and blessedness, an angel of light!

Why, then, should we fear death, save as the wicked fear, and must fear it? Why dread to lay down this frail body in its resting-place, and this weary, aching head, on the pillow of its repose? Why tremble at this—that in the long sleep of the tomb, that body shall suffer disease no more, and pain no more, and hear no more the cries of want nor the groans of distress—and, far retired from the turmoil of life, that violence and change shall pass lightly over it, and the elements shall beat and the storms shall sigh unheard, around its lowly bed? Say, ye aged and infirm! is it the greatest of evils to die? Say, ye children of care and toil, say, ye afflicted and tempted! is it the greatest of evils to die?

Oh! no. Come the last hour in God's own time!—and a good life and a glorious hope shall make it welcome. Come the hour of release!—and affliction shall make it welcome. Come the hour of reunion with the loved and lost on earth!—and the passionate yearnings of affection, and the strong aspirations of faith, shall bear us to their blessed land. Come death to this body—this burdened, tempted, frail, failing, dying body!—and to the soul,—thanks be to God who giveth us the victory!—to the soul, come freedom, light and joy unceasing! come, the immortal life! 'He that liveth'—saith the conqueror over death—'he that liveth and believeth in me, shall NEVER DIE!'

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 121.)

CHAPTER XV.

V. 1. Then came to Jesus Scribes and Pharisees, &c.

The Scribes were persons employed as lawyers, generally Levites.

V. 2. Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?

"The tradition;" injunctions delivered down by the ancestors of the Jews, Heb. xi. 2; but not written in the Law of Moses.

V. 4. For God commanded, saying: Honour thy father and mother, &c.

This duty is not confined to deference and respect, but comprises also assistance, succour, and support. See v. 6, and Acts xxviii. 10, 1 Tim. v. 3.

V. 5. It is a gift.

It is consecrated by me to a religious purpose ; I have vowed that I will give it to the treasury in the Temple. The Scribes and Pharisees seem to have encouraged these rash vows. Children sometimes imitated this practice in their conduct towards their parents.

V. 7. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying :

Used words which are applicable to you.

V. 15. Declare unto us this parable.

Parable signifies a proverb, a moral maxim, a forcible sentence, a weighty doctrine, as well as a comparison.

V. 21. Coasts [borders] of Tyre and Sidon.

Countries to the northwest of Galilee.

V. 22. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts.

A woman of the race of the Canaanites came out from the borders of Tyre and Sidon.

V. 24. I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

That is, according to the analogy of the Jewish language, I am principally or in the first place, sent to them ; or my *personal* ministry is to be confined to the Israelites,

V. 39. And came into the coast of Magdala.

A place on the eastern side of the lake, probably the country of Mary Magdalene.

CHAPTER XVI.

V. 13. When Jesus came into Cesarea Philippi.

"Cesarea"—in the tetrarchy of Philip : so called to distinguish it from another Cesarea on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, to which Paul was carried prisoner from Jerusalem. It was situated near the springs of the Jordan.

V. 14. And they said: Some say that thou art John the Baptist ; some Elias ; and others Jeremias, or [some other] one of the prophets.

The Pharisees believed that the souls of good men migrated into other bodies. Josephus.

V. 16. Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.

"The Christ" signifies the *Anointed*, the same with *Messiah*.

This is the only case in which any man gives the title of "the Son of the living God," to our Lord before his resurrection.

"Bar-jona," in Syriac, means son of Jonah, or Jonas. Syriac at that time was the common language of the country.

V. 18. Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, &c.

Petros in Greek is a rock. *Cephas* in Syriac, his other name, also signifies a rock. The resemblance between *Peter* and *rock* cannot be retained in English.

"Upon this rock;" upon thee as a rock I build my church. Peter was the first apostle who preached to the Jews; Acts ii. 14. And he was the first also who preached to the Gentiles; Acts x. 44—48.

"The gates of hell." *Hades* considered as a place, and Death considered as a person, have gates attributed to their access by the heathen poets: and the same expression may allude to the sepulchres of the Jews and other eastern nations, which were secured by barricadoed gates. The meaning is, that no power shall ever prevail against the church of Christ.

V. 19. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, &c.

This is understood to relate to Peter's opening the church to the Gentiles: but whatever power is here conferred, is also bestowed upon the other apostles: John xx. 23, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Some, however, consider these two texts as wholly unconnected, and understand this, in Matt. as referring solely to admission of Gentiles into the church, and the conditions required of them, See Acts xv. They think that John xx. 23, relates to the punishment or pardoning of offences.

"To bind and loose," were expressions made use of by the Jewish doctors to signify the unlawfulness or lawfulness of things. See Selden, Buxtorf, and Lightfoot.

Others think that these powers were exclusively conferred on Peter, and constituted him prince of the Apostles; that they were transmitted to his successors, and are now vested in the bishop of Rome.

V. 20. Then charged he his disciples, that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

From v. 13, 15, 16, it would appear that the *Son of Man*, *Christ*, and the *Son of God*, were not then words of similar import. Christ calls himself the Son of Man; but Peter was the first to discover and declare, that "He was the Christ the Son of God:" for this he was commended by Jesus; but from this twentieth verse it appears, that our Lord did not wish this to be proclaimed. His reasons probably were: First, that he might not seem to seek his own glory. Secondly, that he wished it rather to be attested by his miracles, than by the testimony of his immediate followers. Thirdly, because there would be a more convenient time for making it known.

Jesus is omitted by Griesbach.

V. 22. Be it far from thee, Lord.

In the Greek it is *God be propitious to thee!*

V. 23. Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me.

Thou actest as an adversary to me, and art a stumbling-block in my way. See note on chap. iv. 8, 9.

V. 26. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his life? or what would a man give in exchange [or as a ransom] for his life? Newcome.

In Greek the same word signifies both *life* and *soul*, animal life and the spiritual principle.

The word *for* in the beginning of the next verse favours the common version of *soul* instead of *life*. The same word, however, is translated *life* in v. 25.

V. 28. There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom.

By the "coming of the Son of Man" the destruction of Jerusalem seems often to be intended.

"As an earnest of the future judgment at the last day, some of you shall live to see me execute vengeance on the unbelieving Jews." Newcome.

The *Son of Man* was an humble title, in which nothing was claimed, but what was enjoyed in common with all mankind. Though Jesus commonly takes it to himself, it is never given him by the Evangelists, in speaking of him. He is never addressed with this title by others, whether disciples or strangers. Now, if the title *Son of Man* had been thought, even in any degree, respectful from others, we should certainly have had some examples of it in his lifetime. Further, our Lord was in the practice of denominating himself in this manner, at the very time he prohibited his disciples from acquainting any man that he was the Messiah. Campbell of Aberdeen.

CHAPTER XVII.

V. 1, 2. And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John, his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them, &c.

Two purposes appear to have been intended by this scene. The first was, to set before the eyes of the disciples a visible representation of Christ's coming to judge the world, in order to comfort and encourage them after his discourse in the preceding chapter. The other purpose was, to signify the cessation of the Jewish, and the commencement of the Christian dispensation. Moses and Elias were natural representatives of the Law and the Prophets; but the superiority of Christ was immediately announced by "a voice out of the cloud, which said: This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

This may have been referred to, by Luke ix. 32, where he calls his appearance, after being transfigured, "his glory;" more ex-

pressly by John i. 14, who gives it the same name; and by Peter, 2 Pet. i. 17, who refers to it by a similar expression.

The above is extracted from Bp. Porteus' Lect. vol. ii. p. 37—56.

Matthew and Mark say "after six days;" and Luke "about an eight days after," as we often say, "this day eight days," meaning a week.

Our Lord, verse 9, calls this representation a *vision*; but Dr. Campbell translates it, *what you have seen*.

V. V. Tabernacles [Gr. sheds or booths.]

V. 10. And his disciples asked him, saying: Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come?

How can Elias come first, if, as we have seen, Messiah be already come.

V. 11. Elias truly shall first come, [Gr. cometh].

V. 15. For he is lunatic.

He was epileptic at the lunar periods. *Newcome*.

V. 20. If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, &c.

The first is a proverbial expression for, in a small degree. See Matt. xiii. 32. The second is an impossibility used on purpose to guard against their understanding him literally, which they might have done, if the example had not been evidently impossible. We use many such exaggerations in common speech.

V. 21. However, this kind [of demons] goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

However, you must acquire faith in God by using the best natural means in order to work such great miracles.

V. 24. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute-money [Gr. the didrachms] came to Peter, and said: Doth not your master pay tribute? &c.

Every Jew annually paid half a shekel, or a didrachm, that is, 1s. 3d. English, to the service of the temple, Exod. xxx. 13, 14. This was now demanded by the authority of the High Priest and of the great council. Others think that it was the poll-tax levied by the Romans. In either case Jesus must have been chargeable with the tribute. Our Saviour's argument (v. 26) against paying this tribute to the temple is, because "he was the son of that king to whom it was paid," viz. God.—*Harwood*.

"Then I as the heir of David and free from this levy." *Newcome*.

Some think that under the Romans the payment of that tribute was voluntary, at least in Galilee; and that they supposed, that Jesus was not willing to contribute to the temple; or they doubted whether he was an inhabitant of Capernaum.

"Jesus prevented him," means, spoke first, or anticipated him. See 1 Thessalonians iv. 15. This was the meaning of the word

“prevent,” in the time of the translators, and this use of it is common in Scripture, and occurs in THE COMMON PRAYER.

The “Piece of money,” which Peter drew up, was the *stater* value 2s. 6d., equal to a shekel or to four drachmas; and therefore the tribute for our Lord and Peter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

V. 3. Except ye be converted.

Unless ye be changed, or reformed.

V. 4. The same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Is regarded by me as greatest here, and shall be raised to the highest degree of glory hereafter. The same qualifications were required for both.

V. 5. In my name.

On my account, or, as my disciple.

V. 6. But whoso shall offend [seduce or discourage] one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, &c.

There were two kinds of millstones, the smaller was a quern turned by the hand; the other, larger, turned by an ass. The latter is expressly mentioned in the original of the text.

V. 7. Woe unto the world because of offences! &c.

This may relate to offences in general, or more particularly to those mentioned in the last verse.

V. 10. In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven.

Some understand by *angels* human souls, considered as separate and distinct from the body. Others think that this passage refers to the popular notions, which the Jews entertained of ministering spirits and guardian angels, either attached to every individual, or having the care of them in general; and some are of opinion, that this is only an emblematical representation of the care of Divine Providence over little children.

By those *who saw the king's face* are, in the Jewish idiom, denoted the most eminent and distinguished personages of a court. Consult Esther i. 14, “Who saw the king's face, and who sat first in the kingdom.”

V. 17. Tell it to the church, &c.

The word translated *church* signifies an assembly; and in the New Testament usually signifies a single congregation. It was originally applied to the assembly of the people in Athens.

“Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” Conduct yourselves to him as you commonly do to such: Acts x. 28. Avoid intercourse with him: 1 Cor. v. 11,—2 Thess. iii. 6, 14,—*Newcome*.

V. 18. Whatsoever [Gr. things] ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, &c.

Proceeding thus, your decisions shall be ratified in heaven, when you cut off a person from Christian communion. See note on chap. xvi. 16, 19.

V. 20. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of you.

“Two or three,” of you my apostles. See Bp. Pearce.

“In my name:” As my disciples, and acting by such authority as I delegate to you.—*Newcome.*

This promise, and those in the two preceding verses, may be understood as limited to the apostolic age, and perhaps to the apostles themselves. To be gathered together in the name of Christ, is to assemble as his disciples, and as acting under his authority. And he was in the midst of them, either by his personal presence, agreeably to his promise, Matt. xxviii. 20, or by a spiritual presence, similar to the gift occasionally conferred upon the apostles, of knowing things which passed in places where they were not actually present, 1 Cor. v. 3, 4; or, lastly, by that authority which he had delegated, and by the powers which he had communicated to them to perform miracles in his name.

V. 23. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants, &c.

“Likened unto;” the phrase, *it is like*, often signifies only in general that the thing spoken of may be illustrated by the following similitude.

V. 24. Owed him ten thousand talents.

The golden talent was equal to £187 15; but there was a silver talent of inferior value, in the proportion of silver to gold. In either case, the words are not to be taken literally, but only to signify a very large debt, as contrasted with a trifling sum of 100 denarii, amounting to £3 2 6.

Doddridge thinks, that our Lord seems to have mentioned so large a sum, on purpose to intimate the number and weight of our offences against God, and our utter incapacity of making him any satisfaction.

(To be Continued.)

THOUGHTS ON THE NECESSITY OF ESTABLISHING A UNITARIAN HOME MISSION SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,—You are aware that one of the charges most frequently urged against Unitarian Christianity is, that it causes its adherents to become careless and lukewarm respecting the spread of religious truth; that it extinguishes Christian zeal, destroys the missionary spirit, and encourages a cold and selfish indifference.

The charge is unfounded, and would be unworthy of notice, did not a variety of circumstances concur to give it an air of plausibility ; of these I shall mention one or two.

It has always been a doctrine advocated by Unitarian preachers, that involuntary error is not damnable, that men will not be condemned by God for believing those doctrines, which, having been impressed upon their minds in infancy, have grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength, and which they may never have heard controverted or denied ; in fact, that good men of all churches, denominations and creeds, may be saved.

Now, this doctrine is rational, consolatory, and peculiarly scriptural. Our Lord, in the parable of the good Samaritan, and the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, refers to, and sanctions it ; Peter inculcates it in his address to Cornelius ; and the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, states it so clearly, that he who runs may read. The minister of the gospel of Christ, is therefore bound to preach it to his people ; but it is also his duty to guard his hearers against those most pernicious errors which have arisen from misunderstanding this important doctrine.

Some have deceived themselves into the most culpable indifference, respecting the progress of Christian truth, by this miserable sophism,—If men of all religions may be saved, why endeavour to spread christianity ? I answer, because it is the very noblest and richest gift which the philanthropist can bestow upon his fellow-men. And when I say with the apostle Paul, that those who have not the law, shall not be judged by it ; when I maintain that the untutored savage who worships, after the fashion of his country, the host of heaven, or the idols which his hands have made ; to whom Christ and Christianity are unknown, will not be punished in the world to come, because of his involuntary ignorance and superstition ; that he will not be tormented hereafter, merely because he hath been unhappy here ; do I mean that the glad tidings of the gospel would not benefit him ? Surely not. On the contrary, it is my firm conviction, that pure Christianity is so rich a blessing, and so glorious a privilege, even with respect to its influence on a man's life in this world, that nothing can be compared with it. And hence, as I honour the man who exerts himself, that he may confer benefits and blessings upon his species ; as I admire those who endeavour to elevate

the degraded, succour the miserable, and instruct the ignorant ; as I esteem the patriot, and revere the philanthropist : so in a still more feeling manner, I sympathize with the zealous and devoted follower of Christ, who is willing to spend and be spent in his master's cause ; who feels for the degradation of man's spiritual nature, as well as for his bodily sufferings, and whose most ardent desire it is, to spread the humanizing influence of rational Christianity over the whole earth. With the consequences of erroneous creeds, and false doctrines in the world to come, I have no concern ; I seek to judge no man's servant ; to his own master let him stand or fall. But this I well know, that much of the misery, degradation and barbarism of the world springs from this source. Look upon the pages of history ; why is it that they are so darkened by the records of crime ? Is it not because the philanthropic spirit of Christianity was unknown or neglected ? Why is it that the great mass of mankind are even yet so subject to superstition and vice ? Is it not because pure and rational Christianity is unknown to them ; and those forms of faith to which they unthinkingly adhere are filled with error and falsehood ; with pleas for spiritual pride, and incentives to vulgar intolerance ?

If these facts be true, (and who will venture to deny them ?) it is certainly our duty to God, and to our fellow men, to exert our best energies in speeding the progress of pure Christianity. Let not any one suppose, therefore, that a profession of liberal religious opinions is inconsistent with the most ardent, and self-devoted zeal ; let not any one excuse his own indolence, or cloak his selfish indifference, by a profession of liberality. God, it is true, is no respecter of persons ; he will not attempt to reap where he has not sown, and therefore the conscientious adherent of erroneous creeds may, in the world to come, receive pity and pardon, instead of punishment. But surely this cannot excuse the indolent and selfish man, who regards with cold indifference the misery which superstition and enthusiasm have brought upon the world.

How strange, how very strange is it then, that men of the most amiable and pious dispositions ; men whose benevolence and philanthropy are undeniable ; who never hear of misery without a desire and an effort to relieve the sufferer, may yet from year to year forget or over-

look that noblest exercise of philanthropy—the attempt to spread pure and rational religious principles. Indeed there is but one method of accounting for this strange indifference. So often has the pretext of religious zeal been used for the purpose of exciting wicked and malevolent passions, and attaining objects of private advantage; so often has it been used in forwarding political intrigues; supporting despotic power, and suppressing the spirit of liberty in nations; so often has it been used to aid ignorance and bigotry, and to persecute the wise and good; and so often has it degenerated into the most debasing and vulgar superstition; that liberal and enlightened men, mistaking the dreadful abuse of this principle, for the noble principle itself, have been led to regard it with unjust aversion. But surely such reasoning is totally false. I admit, indeed, with melancholy earnestness, that a great part of the religious zeal, (a zeal without knowledge,) which is at present so current in the world, is pernicious instead of beneficial to society; because it is often exerted in favour of opinions peculiarly antichristian and unscriptural; in favour of a bigotted, self-sufficient, intolerant spirit; and for the purpose of giving encouragement to the most degrading cant and mischievous fanaticism. But surely this very prevalence of error, and this zeal in its advocates, should rouse and animate, instead of discouraging the philanthropist; should call forth the most earnest and strenuous exertions from those who are the friends of real scriptural truth.

There is but one way in which false opinions can be opposed with success, and the people saved from their pernicious consequences. It is by bringing to their view either by writing or by oral teaching, which is far more efficient, the absurdity of those creeds to which they adhere; their inconsistency with scripture and common sense. Ignorance is the parent of all false doctrines. Let us try to remove this, and the consequences must be beneficial. What man is there then, whose mind God hath enlightened and liberalized by a knowledge of his own divine truth, who does not feel himself called upon by the voice of conscience and of revelation to endeavour to communicate these rich blessings to his less favoured brethren?

All men, it is true, cannot preach; nor are they called to do so; but all can according to the means which God

has given them, contribute in some way to the spread of the gospel of Christ, and thus advance the happiness of man.

I think I am not overstating the fact, when I say, that Unitarian Christians are in general distinguished for the generous liberality with which they contribute to every charitable and philanthropic institution. Among them may be found many who are the friends of the poor, the oppressed and the unfortunate; the disinterested advocates of liberty and knowledge. Why then should not the missionary spirit, that perfection of philanthropy, be more vigorous and apparent? Do these good men pity the wretched and the miserable; and with open-hearted benevolence relieve them? Do they sigh for the unhappy condition of the negro slave, and try, even with many personal sacrifices to unbind his chains, and raise him from his degradation to the rank of a free citizen; and yet can they behold from year to year, without any sympathy, the misery which erroneous religious sentiments have brought upon mankind? What can be more pitiable than to see superstition so enslaving, so degrading the intellect of man, that the silliest sophisms, the most gross and palpable contradictions, and the most childish foolery, should find multitudes of zealous adherents? How lamentable a thing it is that men should so stultify their own minds and the minds of those around them, as to condemn the exercise of reason, although reason is the eye of the soul, the only instrument of enquiry which God has given to man! Nothing is opposed to reason, but insanity; therefore, he that condemns reason, is just so far an advocate for madness. How worthy of sympathy it is, to see people attempting to believe (for the real belief is an impossibility) that three beings are only one being; that Christ is his own Father; that the Father is his own Son, and that it requires the Holy Spirit united with these, to make up one God. How pitiable, to see, men misled by false and worn-out creeds, confounding all the principles of right and wrong, and all ideas of good and evil, by supposing, that God has decreed all the wickedness and sin of men; that he executes his decrees by his works of creation and providence; and then punishes men for doing those things which they could not avoid. What misery is more pitiable, what slavery is more degrading, than a blind submission to such creeds as these!

Will not then, the friends of liberty, and knowledge, and scripture truth, exert themselves to remedy the evil?

I know that there are some, who, despairing of success at present, in so difficult a work, are waiting and resting in the hope that the spread of knowledge, and the effects of a more general enlightenment of the minds of men, may put to flight those remnants of ancient superstitions. Now, though I agree with them in thinking that the general spread of knowledge will aid the progress of pure Christianity; yet I hold, that it is the primary duty of every good man, not merely to hope and pray for the progress of divine truth, and overthrow of superstition, but also to be active and zealous in forwarding that great work.

I have written thus far, to the end, that I might convince the reader of two things.

1. That Unitarian Christianity is not, by any means inconsistent with the most earnest religious zeal; that it gives no plea for selfish indifference, and that when thoroughly understood and felt, it always encourages instead of suppressing the missionary spirit.

2. That it is the positive duty of every Unitarian Christian—a duty for the performance or neglect of which he must answer at the tribunal of God; to exert himself with all diligence, earnestness and zeal in attempting to spread those pure and elevating Christian doctrines by which God has seen fit to enlighten his mind. Have I succeeded in my design?

Observe how active are the enemies of truth. They are not satisfied with the common modes or seasons of action. They have at least the praise of unwearying perseverance. They omit no opportunity of disseminating their false principles. When open attacks fail, they resort to stratagem. When the honest labourer has sown the good seed, and his upright character screens him from violence, their emissaries come in the darkness of night and scatter tares. Perhaps they think, that they are doing good service to the cause of truth. If so, their zeal is commendable. Let us not be ashamed of learning a useful lesson even from such adversaries. They have organized a powerful system for the purpose of spreading the opinions which they support. They have Foreign Missionaries, Home Missionaries, Scripture Readers, Local Preachers, Village Preachers, &c. &c. They are indefatigable in raising funds for the support

of all these. Shall we sit all day idle, or at least comparatively idle, and expect that the sheer force of truth, unaided, unpromulgated, unexplained, shall be sufficient to spread our principles, and defeat the activity of our opponents? Such indolence would certainly be criminal, and more particularly at present, when the people are become quite weary of the dull abuse and foolish misrepresentation of Unitarians and their principles, which they have been compelled to hear, at least weekly, during the last six years; and even from those parts of the country supposed to be the strong holds of Calvinism, there are pressing invitations for us to go over and help them.

I have consulted several, both ministers and laymen, who are zealous in our cause, upon the utility of establishing a Unitarian Home Mission Society; the opinions of all have been favourable to such a design, and I know some who are determined to enter upon the business with zeal and energy.

The details of such a project, it would be premature as well as presumptuous for me to state; but with respect to these there can arise no difficulty. My design in the writing of this paper is, to bring the subject before that part of the public, friendly to our cause; and thus, perhaps, contribute to keep alive in their minds, christian zeal and hope, and to animate their prayers for the prosperity of our little Zion.

I shall add a few words for our mutual encouragement. Let not then the smallness of our numbers afflict us. Let us remember, that in the days of the apostle Paul, christianity had, in all the world, fewer adherents than are at present attached to our churches. Yet this did not discourage the dauntless apostle of the Gentiles; but with a calm and steady reliance upon God's providence, he opposed himself to the numerous and powerful enemies that beset him. Let us without any fear of consequences, imitate his example. We have enrolled ourselves in the noble band of free and rational christians. We have cast in our lot with those, who are determined to contend for liberty, to the minds of men, as well as to their bodies. Our numbers are indeed few; but our cause is good, our hopes high, and our hearts firm. Our army is small, and the fortresses of error which we are beleaguering, have lofty battlements, and a numerous garrison; but in this case, the race is

not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong ; and who knoweth but God may give us power, to pull down some tower of superstition, or silence some battery of sophistry and error ; although we can scarcely hope for the glorious privilege of overthrowing the whole edifice, which the superstition of ages has raised upon human credulity—of standing upon the prostrate battlements, and waving the flag of triumph ?

One thing we do well know, that the cause of pure and rational Christianity, must ultimately succeed, whatever be the fate of its present adherents. Why then should we fear, few and feeble as we are, and surrounded by the locust-like armies of our opponents ? Why should we fear, when the invincible banner of truth, and reason, and christian liberty, floats upon the breeze above us, and from day to day, and from hour to hour, the army of its followers is increasing ?

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM HUGH DOHERTY.

Kirkcubbin, May 25, 1835.

REVIEW.

Christian Tracts, No. 3. The Recollections of Jotham Anderson, and May morning ; by the Rev. H. Ware, of Cambridge University, New England. Archer, Belfast, 1835.

IT is with feelings of pleasure we notice the little book, whose name is at the head of this article. It is one of a series of tracts in course of publication, by a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Belfast, a zealous and devoted friend to liberal christianity.

The Recollections of Jotham Anderson, is one of the *very few* good tracts which have been presented to the public ; it is from the pen of the apostolic Ware, and we trace, in every page of it, the same piety of heart, and fervour of devotion, which characterize the life and writings of the author. We have christianity here put forth in that living and practical form, which it derived from our Saviour's teachings, and wore in our Saviour's life. We have reason without scepticism, and religion without superstition. Devotion is not arrayed in mourning attire, with downcast eyes, and repulsive mien, frowning on God's earth, and trampling on the gifts of heaven's bounty ; but she is

clothed in white garments, her eyes beaming joy; on her face is seen the peace that passeth understanding, while by her presence she is shedding light into the darkened soul, and warning and winning men from the error of their ways.

It may be asserted by some, that the truths in which the book abounds are embodied in a *tale*, for which the author is indebted to *fiction*; but surely the objection is not valid; for was not such the manner in which the Saviour himself so often instructed the people? What are his parables but tales, by which he won the attention of a listless multitude, to all-important, but too often unheeded truths? The same principle, therefore, that would condemn religious tales, would also condemn some of the most attractive portions of our Redeemer's ministry. It cannot be alleged that mankind, in former times, required the use of means to interest them in religion that are now unnecessary; for are there not many still—perhaps, reader, you are one yourself,—that would cheerfully peruse a tale; who yet would carelessly read, or lift up only to lay aside, a dry and argumentative essay. But the truth of these remarks will be more evident, from a brief review of the little book before us.

It represents Jotham Anderson now an old man, verging on the grave, as looking back on the long life through which he had passed, and calling up to his memory, some of the scenes and circumstances of his early life, by which his character was moulded, and his religious opinions were formed or confirmed. The first chapter opens with his reflections on the love of God, as evidenced during the many years that had passed of his life.

“There is one light, as I look back, which I see shining every where, brighter than the sun of my prosperity, and casting the rainbow of peace on every cloud of my adversity—and that is the light of God's love. I cannot remember the hour, when I have seen it hidden. Oh, that I had always honoured and loved it as became his child!—and even now when the infirmities of age are stealing upon me, and to the outward eye of man, nothing remains for me but toil and sorrow; even now that love is not withdrawn. It has lighted up, as I may say, a torch of hope, which dissipates all the present clouds of earth, and scatters the thick darkness of the valley of the shadow of death. He who was the guide of my youth, is the strength of my age. He who was my sun at the noon of life, is my shield at its close. Why should I fear for the future, when the past, though chequered with ill, is yet one continued testimony of divine faithfulness!”

What can be more delightful than the picture that is here presented to us? Old age, after the trials and troubles, the chances and changes of life, passing into the sleep of death, with a hope full of immortality; the faith of the soul increasing as the body sinks under the weight of years, and the spirit putting forth new energies, as those of nature gradually fade away. When we contemplate such a scene, we will be led to ask, whence the faith that thus sweetened the declining life of Jotham Anderson?—and we find that he himself traces its strength and activity to his early childhood. It was the seed then cast on the waters, that was found after many days. He thus speaks of the mother, from whose lips he had learned the lessons of religion that sunk deep into his heart.

“I love to dwell on the memory of that honoured woman. My earliest recollection of her is in the act of teaching me to pray, when she, every evening, took me on her knees, and clasping my little hands, made me repeat after her my childish petitions. Methinks I still see the beautiful expression of her maternal eye, and feel the kiss full of affection and piety, with which she closed the service. At such times she would explain to me the purposes of prayer, and teach me to love the good Being, who gave me father and mother, and made me happy. It was her practice also, to seize the moments, when my young heart was overflowing with cheerfulness and good will, to remind me of the Father above, and direct my gratitude to him. Thus his image became associated in my thoughts, with all that was gladsome and delightful, with every satisfaction, and every enjoyment. It was mingled with all my remembrances of maternal fondness, and the love of God grew upon the same branch with the love of my parents.”

We regret that our limits will not allow us to quote more at length from this portion of the book, as it contains such useful hints to parents and ministers, for instilling religious principles into the minds of children. If there be one study, which above all others, abounds in beauties to attract the attention, and win the heart of the child, it is religion—the knowledge of God, his wisdom, power and love, the great fountain of happiness from which streams are continually flowing to gladden every heart; and yet, from the cold, formal, heartless manner, in which it is commonly imparted—it is the study which, least of all, engages the attention, and captivates the affections of the young. How many parents are there, who speak to their children of their God and their Saviour, only on every returning Sabbath, and then with such ceremony and gloom, that

attention is a labour instead of being a pleasure. During the week, the words of a prayer may be muttered, which is neither felt nor understood, and thus they grow in the form, but without the spirit of godliness, with an aversion to the name, but a total ignorance of the feelings of religion. No wonder that children thus educated, afterwards become the prey of infidelity, or the sport of fanaticism. But it was not thus with Jotham Anderson. His religious principles were early instilled into his mind, they were enshrined in the deepest recesses of his heart, associated with the tenderest recollections of a parent's fondness, and mingled with the holiest joys of his early days. Thus prepared, he went forth into the world protected by the shield of a rational faith. He had many trials to encounter, but he was at last more than conqueror over them all.

His mother died when he was yet young, but his father, a country clergyman, bestowed much pains on his son, and superintended his education till he was ready for college. It was necessary for him then, as his father's means were limited, to employ himself for some time in teaching, and he succeeded in procuring a situation as teacher in a school at some distance. The neighbourhood in which he was now to reside, was overrun with Calvinism in all the enormity of its doctrine, and rigour of its discipline. The bigotry and intolerance which that system of religion so frequently engenders, are most naturally described, while we have a striking view of its operation on the mind of Jotham. Struck with the sincerity and zeal of the people, yet shocked with the extravagance of their opinions, he was greatly perplexed. Many a sleepless night he spent pondering with himself on the matter, willing to believe, yet unable to do so—importuned and besought by heated zealots, yet shrinking from doctrines that contradicted nature, revelation, the love of God, and the teachings of his parents. At length he resolved again to 'search the scriptures;' he diligently prosecuted the task, and rose from it, convinced and confirmed in the benevolent views which he had learned in his childhood.

In progress of time he goes to college, where he becomes so much absorbed in his scientific studies, as entirely to neglect his religious duties; but, in his desire for literary honours, by intensity of application he loses his health, and is brought nigh to the grave.

We are sorry that we must pass over this part of his history, which is written with great power and pathos; but we hasten to his entrance on the ministry. The recollection of this, the most eventful part of his life, gives rise to the following reflections:

“To a conscientious man, who feels the weight and responsibility of the office, the exercises of that season are deep and trying. About to appear as the messenger of God’s word to the souls of men, to be the herald of eternal truths, to be a fellow-labourer with Christ in the work of human salvation, and the bearer of the prayers and intercessions of men, to the mercy-seat of heaven; his spirit is oppressed and trembling, and ready to faint—for how can he discharge so various and awful vocations? But then again when he considers the incalculable importance of the work, to which none other on earth is to be equalled; when he thinks of the honour of bearing a part in it, the shame of drawing back, and the wide field for doing good, his spirits become animated, and he girds himself for the toil, with alacrity and zeal. It seems as it were but yesterday that I was passing through the alternation of hopes and fears, of exhilaration and despondency. I still see the chamber which I paced for hours, anxious and sleepless, night after night; and where I gradually gained resolution to begin the sacred work. Forty-seven years are past and gone, but it is fresh as the memory of to-day. I have in those years passed through many vicissitudes of earthly lot, and hours of trouble have rolled over my heart, enough to obliterate from it every trace of that early anxiety. But it abides vividly in my memory, and the old man of seventy-two, feels over again, as he writes, all the solitudes of the youth of twenty-five.”

A mind, thus impressed with the solemn duties of the sacred profession, was well fitted to undertake its labours, submit to its fatigues, bear with its anxieties and disappointments, and reap the rewards of a successful ministry. We have a most touching account of his introduction into a parish, to which he had gone to preach for an aged minister. The picture which he draws of the old patriarch, speaking to him words of advice, or breathing the accents of prayer, and the death-bed scene, in which the power of the gospel to sanction the departing spirit, is so happily set forth, are among the most affecting in the book. He gives an instructive view of the christian minister’s experience, but we must be content to single out one example, that of Mr. Garstone, who took up his residence in the village.

“He was educated in the most rigid restraint, and imbued diligently with the dogmas of the Assembly’s Catechism. When he had grown to years of understanding, being of a strong mind, and peculiarly susceptible feelings, his reflections on the subject of religion became earnest in the extreme, and occupied him day and

night. A fear of God rather dreadful than pleasant, as he expressed it, had always oppressed him, and now made him miserable. The doctrines which he had learned in childhood, he now began to understand, and reason upon, and apply to himself. He saw that, if they were true, he was condemned by his birth, to an eternal curse, which only the recreating grace of God could remove. And this grace was appointed to visit only a chosen few. Was *he* one of those chosen? Should he ever taste this grace? Or was he abandoned by the discriminating spirit of God, to his horrible destiny? Beneath the agony of heart which this personal application of his creed produced, he struggled long and wretchedly. His misery, he told me, was indescribable. His life, for some months, was a burden of terror and torture."

Reflections such as these haunted his mind for a season, but nature at length triumphed, and he rejected a religion, so opposed to every feeling of justice, and every principle of virtue; and who is there that on calm, sober, unprejudiced consideration, would not adopt a similar course? who is there, unbiassed by early habits, and uninfluenced by religious phrensy, that would not enter into the sentiment of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, and "rather believe the *Bible untrue*, than *God unjust*." The reasoning of Mr. Garstone on this subject, is so concise and forcible, that we are constrained to quote the passage. In reply to a question from Mr. Anderson, as to his belief in the immortality of the soul, he says:—

"I do believe in the immortality of the soul, and for this very reason I cannot believe in the christian religion. For how can I suppose, that immortal beings are formed by their creator, in a bondage so degrading and so hopeless, as that system teaches, from which only a small proportion of them can ever be rescued, and they, only by the sufferings and death of the Creator himself, in human form."

It is to be feared that too many, taking the gospel on human authority, and mistaking the creed of erring men for scripture itself, are driven to deny that Saviour, whom, if they knew in the beauty and simplicity of truth, they would reverence and love. There is nothing in christianity, to stifle benevolence and justice in the human heart, to veil Jehovah in the terrors of darkness, and condemn the great majority of rational immortal beings, to everlasting death. On the contrary, it addresses itself to the best and noblest feelings of our nature, crowns the Deity with light and with love, and offers free, unmerited, eternal salvation to all mankind. Thus, presented by Mr. Anderson, to the mind

of Mr. Garstone, it won his soul, he was led again to peruse the word of God; and at length his doubts and fears were banished, and he was enabled to exclaim with devout and happy faith, "*I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*"

We have far exceeded the limits we had allowed ourselves for the review of this little work; we have omitted much of its excellence, on which we should have dwelt, but we trust that enough has been written to show its worth, and recommend it to the religious public. It contains profitable advice to parents, and important instruction for children; it abounds in useful hints to ministers, and valuable information for their people. Its style is chaste and eloquent, yet so simple as to be read with ease and pleasure by children and servants; and the cost is so extremely moderate, *sixty closely printed pages for six-pence*, that it is accessible to all.

We are glad to learn, that it is to be succeeded by other tracts of a similar kind; and we trust, that the zeal of the publisher will be rewarded by their general circulation.

[To the foregoing Review from the pen of an esteemed friend and correspondent, the Editor would beg leave to add his cordial recommendation of the work, and the edition noticed above. The book ought to be in the house of every family attached to pure and rational religion: and no opportunity of procuring it is ever likely to occur, so favourable as the present.]

ON THE ATONEMENT.

(Continued from p. 160.)

THOSE advocates for the doctrine of vicarious punishment, who held that our Saviour's sufferings atoned for the sins of *all* mankind, unintentionally represent the Deity as acting a part barbarously tyrannical. They represent him as first exacting from an individual, the full amount of that penalty, which the utmost rigour of retributive justice could have legally exacted from the entire human race; and yet not content with this adequate compensation, as afterwards extorting from myriads and myriads of mankind, a *second* payment of the same penalty: impelling them to satisfy over again by their personal and eternal torments, a demand which has already been satisfied by their substitute and Re-

deemer. If ample expiation for the offences of the whole world has actually been received, on what principle of law, or equity, can another expiation be required, from offenders of any description whatever? If the transgressions of all Adam's posterity have been answered for by their surety; if the claim of divine justice has been cancelled, and the fury of divine wrath been appeased by the blood shed on Mount Calvary, transgressors need have no fear of being hereafter called to an account. The debt has been discharged even to the uttermost farthing; and, of course, the debtor cannot fairly be held any farther responsible. Such theologians, therefore, as maintain the universality of our Lord's atonement in the *Orthodox* sense of that word, must also maintain, in order to be consistent, that there will be no future state of punishment, (or corrective suffering)—no hell, no purgatory;—for thus, and thus only, can *their* views of "satisfaction" be reconciled with either the goodness or the equity of the Most High.

Calvinists, on the other hand, affirm that our Mediator took on him the guilt, and bore the punishment of the elect only; and consequently, that none of those persons in whose stead he suffered, will be subjected to any penal retribution hereafter. In this particular respect, Calvinists are, no doubt, consistent; but, if we contemplate their entire system, the frightful picture there presented of the Supreme Being will cause the blood to freeze in our veins. We are told in the 3d chapter of the Westminster Confession, that "by the decree of God, some men are predestined unto everlasting life; and others fore-ordained unto everlasting death—that the men thus predestinated and fore-ordained are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished." We are told, that "those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, * * * * * hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, * * * *without any foresight of their faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature moving him thereunto*; and all to the praise of his glorious grace." We are farther told, that "the rest of mankind, God was pleased, * * * for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to sovereign wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glori-

ous justice." We are elsewhere told, "that God did, from all eternity, decree to justify the *elect* from their sins; and that in the fulness of time Christ died for *them*"—"Others not elected * * * cannot be saved; much less can men not professing the Christian religion be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they ever so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature; * * * and to assert that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested."

Does it not appear, from the foregoing extracts, that "the glory," and of course the happiness of our Heavenly Father, would have been incomplete, had not countless myriads of his children been *inevitably* subjected, (as the Confession elsewhere states) "to grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell-fire for ever?" Observe the almost redundant luxuriance of these expressions; observe the glow of animation by which they were evidently dictated. The authors seem to have contemplated with Satanic exultation the interminable tortures of their fellow-men; and a theme so agreeable and inspiring, naturally prompted a copious enumeration of descriptive particulars!

The ancient and modern Confessors of the Calvinistic faith assure us, that the individuals predestinated unto life, were "*chosen without any foresight of their faith or good works.*" This being the case, does it not follow, by fair inference, that those fore-ordained unto death, were doomed to that awful fate, without the slightest reference to their *want* of those qualifications, "or to any other thing in them," the doomster thereunto moving? Does it not follow by fair inference, that the *damnation* of the non-elected was decreed from the same capricious motive, and on the same chance-medley principle, which led to the salvation of the fortunate few?*

* Burns has thus graphically portrayed the doctrine of election :

"O thou, * * * * *
 Who, as it pleases best thyself,
 Sends ane to heaven, and ten to hell,
 For thine ain glory,
 And no for ony guid or ill
 They've done afore thee!"

For this and similar exposures of fanaticism, the unfortunate poet of Ayrshire has been denounced as "Scotland's curse," by a reverend gentleman once honoured with the appellation of John Knox, the second. But alas! how times have changed! This formerly

In fact it is not merely intimated, but plainly and expressly declared in the Westminster Confession, "that for the praise of his glorious justice, and for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, God was pleased to ordain some of them to dishonour and wrath." These are the reasons assigned for a decree so dreadful. The Almighty predestined the great mass of mankind to torments, inconceivable in degree, and everlasting in duration, that he might thus have an opportunity of manifesting his power to inflict those torments. He consigned them to oblivion, just to shew that he could do it. He placed them under a necessity of transgressing, that he might create an occasion to display his justice in punishing them for those very transgressions, which he himself had previously taken care to render unavoidable. If this is justice, let Caligula be canonized. Let Moloch be adored. The most detestable tyrant that ever disgraced human nature, would have recoiled from the perpetration of cruelty so reckless and gratuitous. The being capable of acting in the manner supposed cannot be the same with him who delighteth in

lauded individual, on whose shoulders the mantle of him "who never feared the face of clay," was supposed to have fallen, has since become the fawning parasite of that prelatical church, an alliance with which the unbending reformer would have died sooner than have proposed!

I am tempted to present the reader with another homely but faithful synopsis of Calvinism—a synopsis which strikingly exhibits the incongruity of that system, in combining our obligation to perform good works, with our total inability to perform them, and their uselessness, nay, *sinfulness*, when performed by us "unregenerate men." (See West. Conf. ch. 16, sect. 7th.)

" We must be good,
Yet we can't be good,
And if we could be good,
'Twould do us no good."

Who can deny the correctness of this delineation? The Orthodox exclaim against us, for ridiculing them and their peculiar opinions.—But if an opinion be so preposterously absurd, that the bare statement of it provokes a smile, on whom ought blame to rest? In my judgment one of the surest ways to avoid ridicule, is to refrain from saying or doing ridiculous things. If *we* occasionally indulge in a harmless laugh at the expense of our opponents, *they* very gravely and deliberately consign us to perdition. Let any one judge whether *we* or *they* have the greater cause of complaint. I cannot help thinking that ours is rather the harder case of the two.

mercy, and whose loveliest name is love. No, instead of delighting in mercy, the character depicted delighteth in misery—is gratified and glorified by the perdition of his own hapless and helpless offspring. Surely this is not the one God and Father of all, but some malignant usurper, whom gloomy superstition has seated on his throne—some fiend who would depopulate heaven in order to crowd hell. Let Calvinists now boast, if they will, that they have avoided that slough of difficulty and perplexity, into which their brethren who maintain the universality of vicarious satisfaction have unconsciously plunged. Their own scheme of particular redemption is, if possible, still more incompatible with the rectitude of the divine administration. Some of their most eminent writers affirm that a single drop of the Saviour's blood would have been sufficient to make ample atonement for the sins of the whole world. That precious blood was shed in copious streams on Mount Calvary, yet its saving efficacy, instead of being allowed to extend unto all men, as it would naturally have done, was arbitrarily and capriciously confined to a few individuals who, when selected as favourites, were not more deserving than their death-doomed fellow-creatures.

Note on the Duration of Future Punishment.

So far as I am competent to judge, the Arminian who maintains the absolute eternity of future punishments, involves himself in results hardly less embarrassing than those which the Calvinist unshrinkingly contemplates. If millions, and millions of millions, are, after all, to perish everlastingly, it makes, in my opinion, but little substantial difference, whether an *omniscient* and *omnipotent* Being has *decreed* or merely *permitted* the heart-sickening catastrophe. If he foresaw, and had power to avert the interminable misery of a large proportion of his offspring, may not that misery be considered as virtually fore-ordained? In regard to his wretched creatures, the practical consequences are in either case exactly the same. Were it not a solecism, I would say, that existence was forced on them—that no alternative was vouchsafed. Had they, like Adam, been formed at first with intellectual faculties matured, and had a knowledge of their eventual ruin been immediately communicated to them, would not annihilation

have been supplicated as a boon? Their creation was an act perfectly optional on the part of the Almighty, and would it not have been kinder of him to refrain from bringing them into being, than to launch them into a life which he knew would ultimately terminate in a fate so deplorably dreadful? In truth the Deity's dealings with his creatures cannot be satisfactorily vindicated, except on the ground that, by a severe but salutary course of discipline, the wicked will hereafter be reclaimed from sin, and consequently released from suffering; and that all will ultimately be well, under the government of a God who delights in promoting virtue and happiness. The Universalist is the only person who can silence the Calvinist. It would not be difficult to show, that the doctrine of a full and final restoration is conformable to scripture as well as to reason; and that so far from being adverse, it is highly conducive to holiness of life. The same principle which has, I believe, been practically verified in almost every human government holds equally good under the divine. A lesser punishment, which it is known, will be strictly and rigidly inflicted, has far more effect in preventing the commission of crimes, than one, from the excessive cruelty of which the feelings of our nature involuntarily recoil. Laws written with blood are always more or less inoperative. When the penalty denounced, or supposed to be denounced, is beyond all proportion to the offence, a secret persuasion is almost unavoidably excited, that the menace has been held forth merely to terrify, and was never intended to be actually enforced. That all the sins which it is possible for a frail mortal to commit during the few years of his existence upon earth, can *deserve* endless misery, or that they will be visited with endless misery by him who remembers that we are dust, is a doctrine so repugnant to every moral sentiment implanted in the human breast, that doubts of its truth, or rather hopes of its falsehood, must occasionally be felt by every reflecting individual. According to the popular creed, all the descendants of Adam will hereafter be divided into two classes, one of which will be unspeakably and eternally wretched—the other unspeakably and eternally blessed. Between the two classes thus widely separated, no intermediate shades of distinction, no connecting gradations, either of character or of destiny, are supposed to exist. He who escapes the con-

demnation of the former will be received into all the fullness of joy reserved for the latter. But does this incalculable inequality as to future condition, at all correspond with the real comparative merits and demerits of mankind? Are the least deserving of those who shall be everlastingly rewarded, and the least undeserving of those who shall be everlastingly punished, divided from each other by such an immeasurable distance in point of spiritual qualifications, as to justify this immeasurable difference in their respective dooms? By no means.—Let the alleged line of discrimination be drawn where it may—let it cut across the ranks of the arrayed human race, as much to the right hand, or as much to the left hand as you please, still the religious disparity between the individuals nearest to it on one side, and the individuals nearest to it on the other, must be very inconsiderable indeed. From the lowest depth of depravity into which mortal man ever sunk, up to the loftiest summit of excellence which mortal man ever attained, there is an ascent so gradual as to be nearly imperceptible; and at what stage on this acclivity is the dread barrier to be erected, all who are above which shall be deemed worthy of boundless and never-ending felicity, and all who are below which shall be condemned on a principle of even-handed retribution, “to grievous torments both in soul and body, without intermission, in hell-fire for ever?” No such site will ever be pointed out.

If we form a moral estimate of the Christian world, it will probably appear, that a great majority of its constituents are persons who maintain a kind of mediocrity between virtue and vice; who, though far from being so good as the best of their fellow-men, are far, nevertheless, from being so bad as the worst. An individual of this description, whilst he is conscious of many imperfections and faults, is also conscious of possessing some amiable and estimable qualities; and let his theoretical creed be what it may, let clerical declaimers expatiate on eternal burnings in language the most terrific that diseased imagination can suggest, still, there is something within, which tells him, that he, and such as he,—men who, with all their failings, are useful members of society,—are beloved, and often respected by their acquaintances;—are kind husbands, affectionate parents, and dutiful sons—there is something within which tells him,

that characters of this kind do not deserve the horrible fate denounced by Calvinism against transgressors of every grade. The more glowing the colours in which the fiery furnace and its sulphureous gleams are depicted, the more convinced does he feel, that to so fearful a place of torment he cannot without injustice be eternally consigned. An innate sense of equity will not allow him seriously to believe, that the errors and follies of a life which has never been stained with gross or flagitious turpitude, will subject a feeble child of mortality to eternal perdition.—Such a monstrous calumny on the goodness, wisdom, and power of the Deity being thus repudiated, and very properly repudiated, what is the alternative which Orthodoxy presents to him? She holds forth the flattering prospect of *absolute impunity*, of total exemption *from every* species of suffering. If endless woe is not to be his portion, (and his heart tells him that it will not,) the creed in which he has been educated, and the preachers whom he is accustomed to hear, lead him to expect, that so soon as he shall have laid aside the garment of mortality, he will be immediately enrobed with celestial splendour, and ushered into the mansions of eternal bliss. At all events, he has been taught to imagine, that he will enter at once on such a portion of felicity as is fully sufficient to satisfy his spiritual ambition. A most powerful incentive to moral and religious improvement, is thus completely superseded. Lulled by the delusive hope of immunity from all corrective retribution, he sets his mind at ease, pursues without much compunction, his usual course of living, and makes no serious or effectual endeavours to wean himself from the sin that doth most easily beset him. Whereas, were he thoroughly convinced, that the greater his present advances in holiness, the higher will be his future advancement in happiness,—were he convinced, that the more and the longer he transgresses here, the more and the longer will he suffer hereafter,—that, whilst he continues to be wicked, he cannot be otherwise than wretched, and that either in this world or the next, the lusts of the flesh must be rooted out of his soul,—were he convinced of these truths, is it not reasonable to presume, that he would be stimulated to act a wiser and more praiseworthy part? So far then is the doctrine of ultimate universal restoration from leading to licentiousness, that it operates as a most powerful dissuasive from all ungodliness.

If we are warranted in believing that God is love, and Scripture declares him to be so, he never can become the relentless tormentor of any of his creatures ; never can have brought any of them into existence, foreseeing, as he must have done, that ruin inevitable is to be their woeful inheritance. If we are warranted in believing that God is just, he will not inflict eternal perdition for temporary offences. Let any one think for a moment, on the awfulness of the destiny, which eternal perdition imports. These words, and others tantamount in meaning, are so familiar to the lips, and so frequently and flippantly used in the hearing of a certain description of christians, that the horrible extent of their signification is in a great measure unfelt. Those people are so habituated to speak of hell, and the bottomless pit, and that unquenchable fire, the smoke of which ascendeth for ever, that they speak of them with a pathetic coolness and composure—Even delicate females—females whose bosoms would heave with sympathetic sorrow, and whose eyes would overflow with tears of tender sensibility, on reading a tale of imaginary distress, can so completely unsex themselves as to gloat with seeming complacency on that liquid lake of burning brimstone, to the interminable tortures of which they calmly and unhesitatingly consign an incalculable majority of the human race ; and amongst them such of their own nearest and dearest relatives as happen to differ from themselves on some speculative points of dogmatic theology. Imagination has been urged to the widest and wildest flights for the purpose of bringing home sufficiently frightful representations of the never-ending tortures reserved for countless millions of creatures formed in the image of their Maker. One of these illustrative representations, I recollect ; though, whether it was an original picture or a copy, memory does not enable me to say ; but right well do I remember the sleepless hours which the impression made by it on my youthful feelings, caused me pass on the couch devoted to repose—“ Look” said my well-meaning but ill-judging monitor, “ look at that large and lofty mountain—suppose that a single minute particle of the sand composing it, were to be carried away by some small bird, once and only once in a thousand years—that pile of earth, immense as it is, would, in the revolutions of innumerable ages, be exhausted ; yet, even then, the unendurable torments of

the reprobate would be barely beginning!" Such dreadfully shocking representations defeat the object for which they are adduced. The question forcibly obtrudes, can these things be under the government of one who pitieth his creatures even as a father pitieth his children? Would the most obdurate earthly parent, act in this manner to the most profligate of his offspring? In saying that Calvinism makes the Father of mercies a Moloch, I use language by no means too strong. That frightful theology tells us, that before the worlds were, the Almighty made an eternal and immutable decree, totally irrespective of the merits or demerits of those whom he afterwards brought into being,—according to which decree some of those creatures were ordained for eternal happiness; but all the rest, consisting of myriads, which not the stars of heaven, nor the sands on the sea-shore, nor the drops of falling rain, nor the blades of grass which deck with verdure the plains, can equal in number,—are doomed to unavoidable and irremediable wretchedness. Can this be true? The heart and the soul cry out, No, no, no. The doctrine is disproved by its own extravagance. In vain does the Calvinist urge that sins committed against an infinite Being, assume an infinite malignity, and consequently merit an infinite punishment. Without waiting to expose the absurdity of supposing that evil doers are to be requited, not according to the extent of their criminality, but according to the rank of the superior against whom they offend, I would merely observe, that as all transgressions are acts of disobedience to the same omnipotent Ruler, it would follow on the principle laid down, that all transgressions are equally heinous, and ought of course to be equally punished. The former of these positions is contrary to fact, and the latter is contrary both to equity and scripture. Christ himself hath told us, that some shall hereafter be beaten with many stripes, and some with few; and that in the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for certain persons, than for others who shall receive a greater condemnation. Indeed this must necessarily be the case, if men are to be judged according to their deeds. The point now in question has also been consentiently decided by an authority not much inferior, in the opinion of Calvinists, to that which has just been adduced. "Some sins, in themselves," say the Westminster Divines, "and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others."

The sufferings to which even the worst of men shall in a future state be subjected are to be considered as merely remedial, and will ultimately terminate in universal purification from depravity; and the predominance of righteousness, and peace, and happiness, throughout the whole rational creation of God. The misery invariably produced by sin, answers the same beneficial purpose in the moral world, which the pain occasioned by hunger accomplishes in the animal. In the ordinary course of things, we have frequent opportunities of observing, that the evils which men experience from the indulgence of bad passions, or irregular propensities, are providentially rendered conducive to the reformation of their manners. "The sinner's own devices are made to reprove him, and his back-slidings to correct him." This being the effect which suffering has on some offenders at present, why may it not hereafter produce the same salutary effect on offenders in general? Is it not extremely probable that such will be the case?

This world is a school of moral discipline and improvement, and in such a preparatory state, the partial prevalence even of vice would seem to be requisite for the production and exercise of some of the best dispositions of the human heart, and some of the noblest graces of the christian character. Were there no bad men in society to molest, and injure, and persecute, and calumniate the good—the latter would, no doubt, be innocent, and harmless, but they would have no opportunity of practising patience or forgiveness, magnanimity or fortitude. The mildness of the meek could not possibly be discovered, were it not for the violence of the passionate, and the haughtiness of the proud. The heroic devotion of the martyr could never have shone forth, had it not been for the cruelty and intolerance of the narrow-minded bigot. In fact, were there no vices amongst men, one half of their virtues, and not the least illustrious half, would neither have a place nor a name. Amongst creatures so imperfect as we are at present, the amiable disposition which is never called into exercise, is in danger of being extinguished. It is, therefore, expedient, that the Bethesda of life should not always remain still; were the pool not occasionally troubled, it would almost inevitably become putrid and offensive.

To the restitutionist, the existence of evil is no longer a perplexity. He can perceive how evil is ultimately made conducive to good—good, not to a few favourites capriciously selected, but to the whole multitudinous family of man. That disciplinarian education of his children, which God has commenced in this world, he will gradually bring to a consummation in the next, and they shall all be finally virtuous and happy. The doctrine of universal salvation, is soothing to every feeling and affectionate heart. It throws a cheering and glorious light on some dispensations of the Deity, which would otherwise be dark, and dismal, and comfortless. The promptings of nature, the yearnings of the human bosom, the benevolent character of our heavenly Father, and the general strain and tenor of Revelation, all harmoniously concur in recommending this gloom-dispelling doctrine to our unhesitating adoption.

Those who maintain the opposite opinion rest the weight of their argument on the words which in our English Bibles, are translated "*for ever*," *eternal*," "*everlasting*," &c. and are frequently used to designate the time during which future punishment, or rather future correction, is to last. But it is universally allowed, that in the original language, as well as in our own, these and similar expressions do not always denote eternity of existence, in the strict sense of the phrase; but merely indefinite duration—a duration, the extent of which is not precisely specified. In Scripture they are frequently applied to persons, and things, which either have come, or, which assuredly will come to an end. Thus the earth is said to be "established for ever, to abide for ever," and to be "irremovable for ever," though we all know that an era will arrive, when the earth and the heavens will both be no more. The land of Canaan was given to the children of Israel, as an "everlasting possession," and "an inheritance for ever." Jerusalem is called the everlasting city. We read of everlasting doors, hills and mountains. The descendants of Aaron are repeatedly described as an "everlasting priesthood." In the Old Testament it is declared, that a certain fire "shall for ever be burning—that it never shall go out;" yet the fire alluded to has long since been extinguished. It is said in the New Testament, to be sure, that in hell the worm died not, and the fire is not quenched. Be it observed, however, that a particular place is here ex-

pressly mentioned, and the meaning evidently is, that the wicked will be miserable so long as they remain in that place, but it by no means follows, that they are to be kept there to all eternity. It is also said, that the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, either in this world, or in that which is to come. At first view this declaration does certainly appear to convey the idea of endless duration; but if we reflect for a moment on the general intenseness of Scripture phraseology, we shall be satisfied that it does not. No one, I presume, thinks it absolutely impossible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven; or for those who have been long accustomed to do evil, to learn to do well. Yet if only the literal meaning of language be regarded, both these things are positively affirmed in the Gospel. Let due allowance, then, be made for the ardent and hyperbolical modes of expression which pervade the whole Bible, and candour will constrain us to admit that the words above quoted prove not the eternal perdition of persons guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit, but merely that they shall be doomed to penal retribution here, and hereafter. Not that their punishment shall be everlasting, but that the merited extent of punishment shall be fully inflicted.

The most plausible objection to the doctrine now maintained, is derived from that portion of Scripture which declares, that "the wicked shall go aw. into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into eternal life." From this it has been argued, and argued with apparently considerable force, that as the self-same term which is here employed to denote the endurance of the happiness of the good, is also employed in the self-same sentence to denote the endurance of the misery allotted to the bad, it must have the same meaning in each of the two cases; and, as the blessedness of the former will confessedly be endless, the wretchedness of the latter must be endless also.

I have already stated, and shewn, that the original phrase, which in the passage before us is indiscriminately translated "eternal and everlasting," sometimes denotes perpetual, and sometimes limited duration; and of course its exact import must always be determined, by the connexion in which it happens to stand, and the nature of the person or subject to which it refers. Its application, therefore, in the verse now commented on,

first to the punishment of the disobedient, and afterwards to the felicity of the faithful, affords no proof that the different destinies of those two classes will be of equal continuance. The principles of common equity—the dictates of common sense—the attributes of God, and the general spirit and bearing of other portions of Scripture, warrant us in concluding, that “aionion,” the Greek term in question, has not the same signification when used with regard to future suffering, which it has when used with regard to future happiness. If the Supreme Being is just and merciful, he will be sparing in dealing out the former, and generous, bountiful and plenteous in dispensing the latter. The alleged incongruity of supposing that the epithet “everlasting” should be differently interpreted when occurring twice in the same sentence, furnishes no ground of objection. To bring forward this circumstance as an argument, is to assume that the sacred historians paid a scrupulous and pedantic attention to verbal accuracy of expression, which the general style of their writings proves they did not. They were disciples, not of Priscian, but of Christ—not scholastic grammarians, but narrators of truth; and gave utterance to the promptings of the spirit in such language as unlearned men of plain common sense, would naturally employ. Several instances might be adduced from the Bible, not merely of other words, but of this very word “aionios,” having different meanings when occurring twice in the same verse. After descanting on the tremendous majesty of Jehovah, the prophet Habakkuk says, “the *everlasting* mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; but his ways are *everlasting*.” In the first clause of this quotation, the phrase “everlasting” cannot denote absolute eternity of continuance; for mountains, hills, and valleys will all pass away. In the last clause, it must unquestionably be understood to designate endless duration, for God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. With him is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning. And be it remarked and remembered, that in this passage of Scripture, the adjective “everlasting” has significations thus widely dissimilar, when applied to substantives as directly and immediately contrasted with each other, as are the blessedness of the righteous, and the misery of the wicked in the judicial sentence to be pronounced by our Lord. In truth, to rest a doctrine of such fearful magni-

tude as that of eternal perdition, on the philological preciseness, the punctilious lexicographical nicety of the fishermen and tentmakers of Galilee, seems to me as vain an undertaking as it would be to suspend, or think of suspending the Andes in liquid air, by a thread drawn from the gossamer's tiny texture.

For two other instances of discrepant meanings being attached to the epithet "aionios," when occurring oftener than once in the same passage, See Rom. xvi. 25, 26, and Titus i. 2. I refer to the original Greek—the rendering of the term has been unnecessarily varied by King James's translators.

This important subject cannot here be adequately discussed. I have been led into the foregoing unpremeditated and desultory remarks, by a wish to obviate the force of some retaliative arguments advanced by the Calvinistic advocates of vicarious satisfaction; and which, according to my judgment, no Arminian, who believes in the eternity of future punishments, can effectually repel.

Such are some of "the glorious and everlasting doctrines of the "Westminster Confession of Faith."

SIGMA.

(To be Continued.)

OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Extract from the Session-Book of the First Presbyterian Congregation, of Larne.

PERHAPS, in the absence of more important matter, the following extract may not be displeasing to our readers. —To those who are obliged by duty to take part in the religious controversy of the day, it may be interesting to find that the questions which now so much occupy the public mind, were, upwards of one hundred years ago, agitated in the North of Ireland; and to the members of that particular Congregation, a portion of whose Records is now made public, it may be agreeable to read, that the liberality, by which as a Christian Society, they stand distinguished, is not the growth of yesterday; but that more than a century has passed away, since first their forefathers and predecessors "discoursd. of privat. judgmt."

“Novr., 30, 1733. The Sess. met for prayr., and came to consider of the great omission of that duty, yt. tho’ it had been for some time after Mr. Clugston’s settlemt. observed, yet had been for above one year by-past wholly neglected.—Resolved to meet once in every fortnight for time to come.—Resolved, also, yt. they wd. begin and end wt. prayr., and spend the interval in conference, which mt. tend to their knowledge and edification; and that any of the members that should happen to be absent from any of these meetings should be obligd. to give in their reasons for ye. same next Sabbath, or undergoe a reprimand.—Concludd. wt. prayr.

“Dec. 13. Ye. Sess. met and observd. ye. Resolution above said—discoursd. of privat. judgmt.; of a Haritek and ye. Trinity.—Concludd. wt. prayr.

“Dec. 28. They met, and after prayr. discoursd. of ye. covenant of grace; of ye. imputation of Christ’s Righteousness; and whether a person was obligd. to believe any thing as an article of ye. Christian faith, which he could not understand; and lastly, of ye. imputation of Adam’s first sin to all his posterity.—Concludd wt. prayr.

1733—4.

“Jan. 10. Only a few of ye. Sess. wt. Curispondts. (viz. Mr. Workman and Mr. Jas. Smith) met, and after prayr. they talked of ye. way ye. Westminster Confession speaks of ye. union of ye. two natures in Christ, in ye. 8th chap. 2dly. of ye. Gospel prohibition of eating blood; 3dly, of prayr., to whome and for whome; 4ly, of Sinods and their power; 5ly, of ye. miserys. ye. fall brought upon mankind, and whether they were fairly describd. by ye. Confession thereof to all mankind, and whether that was a damning sin in infants.—Concludd. wt. prayr.

“Jan. 31. The Sess. met, and after prayr. conferrd on several things but ye. minister Mr. C. being absent, did not goe so thoroughly as they might on some points; only talkd. of ye. first chapr. of ye. Westminster Confessn, concerning ye. light of Nature leaving men inexcusable, and yet not being suffict. &c. &c. also of Christ, that there is no other name given among men by which we can be saved, and ye. meaning of ye. text; also ye. promises made by Christ of ye. signs yt. shd. follow believing on him, how that appeared; and of a man’s believing anything as an article of faith, merely because another person believed it.—concludd wt. prayr.

“Feb. 14. Part of ye. Sess. met for prayr, and conference, and also for accounting wt. their minister; but John Finley, [Session Clerk] not being there till near ye. latter end, had no knowledge of what passt.—Conclud. wt. prayr.

“Feb. 28. Some members of ye. Sess. met, but John Finley did not goe.

“March 14. They did not meet.

“April. 4. Some of ye members of ye. Sess. met, but John Finley absent,—and after this time they observd. no more such meetings.”

LADY HEWLEY CASE.

THIS important case was partly heard on appeal by Lord Chancellor Brougham, assisted by two Judges who seemed by common consent to be considered very suitable persons for the purpose;—but on the breaking up of the Melbourne Administration, the relators refused to allow the cause to continue to be heard *by consent* by the then Ex-Chancellor and his assistants. In this refusal it seemed to us they were right. We confess we do not see how either party, acting not for themselves but on behalf of large bodies of beneficiaries, could have arranged the creation of a voluntary tribunal to *make an award* on a matter not affecting the personal rights of the litigant parties, but involving the interests of those who were not and could not be consulted. It seems to us difficult to conceive how any Judges, when divested of their judicial authority, and therefore become mere private individuals, *ought* to undertake such an office in a case of the sort, or how effect could properly be given to their decision if they did. We are told the plan in these cases is for the succeeding Judge, by consent, to adopt and sign the extrajudicial sentence put into his mouth; but our doubt still remains how that Judge can for a moment conceive himself justified to his country and his conscience in adopting the dictation or consent of any one in cases not *strictly personal*; much less where he would then be deciding on the rights and interests of whole classes, as in the instance of a public charity.

On the appointment of Lord Lyndhurst, therefore, the matter was to be re-argued, and it was supposed that at least the information and experience acquired by the assistants of his predecessor would have been turned to account. However, for some reason not easily understood, two new judges were called in upon this occasion.

The case, which began early in the year, once again broke off by the departure of these two Judges for their circuit. Some singular inadvertence or miscalculation on the part of the Bench seems to pervade the bearings of this unfortunate cause; for why (any one will naturally ask) is such a cause begun when it may be at once seen that it cannot be proceeded in to an end? and why are Judges selected who, it is known beforehand, must, by their immediate departure, break up the sitting?

By the time appointed for the re-assembling of the Court a second change of administration in fact had taken place—Lord Lyndhurst

had gone the way of his predecessor ; and one would have expected that under similar circumstances a like course would have been pursued, as in the former case, for similar reasons.

However, it was determined to proceed by consent in this instance. In our view of the case, the parties (as we have already observed, and as appeared to be conceded on the former occasion) had no right to form such an arrangement ; and if so, it follows that the Court did and will do wrong in giving effect to proceedings entered into by parties wholly incompetent, as we conceive, to erect a voluntary tribunal for the determination of the rights of others.

In other respects we fear the argument on this occasion will give any thing but public satisfaction. Every one knows that a Chancellor's mind, in a season of political change, can be little in the mood for the patient discussion of a subject to him tedious and uninteresting. On the present occasion, moreover, it unfortunately happened that one of the Judges was singularly impatient. He appeared not sufficiently to bear in mind that though much of what had to be detailed was familiar to him, as a scion of an old dissenting stock, and might therefore to him seem as mere "household words," yet that his brethren had not had equal means of previous intimacy with the topics addressed to him. We must attribute it to this inadvertence that the trustees' leading counsel was throughout subjected to so much perpetual interruption as hardly to be able to pursue his argument.

The defendants' leader, Sir C. Pepys, had left the Bar for the Bench ; Sir C. Wetherell was out of town ; Mr. Cooper absented himself, with what justification we know not ; and in fact only two counsel were heard for the defendants in reply to the relators' three ; an arrangement having been at last made that the relators should waive their right of reply, on the trustees agreeing to end the argument with the speech of their second counsel. It appears to us that, under the circumstances, this was at the time the best thing to be done ; though it bears strong evidence on the face of it that all parties felt they were in a false and inefficient position, and that, for some reason or another, a full hearing was out of the question and not likely to give either party any further advantage. We fear that it will also have the effect of rendering all that has been done nugatory, so far as regards any satisfactory settlement of the question, though it *may* have a very unfortunate effect in prejudicing the final result. Expense, we believe, will not have been saved by it. On the contrary, on whichever side a decision turns, after such a hearing, the unsuccessful party will, we have no doubt, find itself driven by public opinion to enter upon a more expensive appeal to the superior tribunal ; and we cannot help thinking that the best thing which could happen for all parties would be that some of those beneficially interested on one side or the other should memorialize the present occupants of the judicial Bench in Chancery, protesting against their giving effect to the three extra-judicial functionaries, and should thereby enforce—as it appears to us such a proceeding must do—a mature, patient and well-considered argument of a question far too important to be dealt with in this way.

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VOL. VI.

VERACITY.

TRUTH has been divided into metaphysical and moral.* Metaphysical or philosophical truth is an agreement between our assertions or opinions and the nature of things—moral truth, an agreement between our words and our sentiments. If I say, that the moon is as large as the sun, believing this to be the case, I am not guilty of a breach of moral truth, although the proposition is philosophically false, because I say what I think:—but if I said, that the sun was much larger than the moon, believing them to be of the same size, the assertion would be morally false, though philosophically true, because it contradicted my real opinion. Moral truth, then, is only another expression for Veracity. The contrary of philosophical truth is error; but the opposite to Veracity is lying. The essence, therefore, of Veracity consists in speaking as we think; and the essence of a lie consists in an intention to deceive. One may be misled and deceived by a philosophical untruth, as well as by a moral falsehood; but if there be no *intention* to deceive, the speaker is not chargeable with a lie.

These are the first rudiments or elements of our duty; but St. Paul requires more: “Speak the truth, and speak it in love.” This distinction intimates some modifications of the virtue of Veracity, which I shall endeavour to explain.

1. “Speak the truth.” All men are inclined by nature to speak truth: for to speak truth is to express our own thoughts; and what else can a man be prompted by nature to express? Whenever, therefore, he is tempted to utter a falsehood, and thus to belie his own sentiments, it must be from some sinister view, at least some principle contrary to the simple dictates of his nature. He may conceal his opinions and feelings with a prudent and innocent design; but if he utter a falsehood, it must be with a view to deceive; and if he

* For Truth, see page 193.

wish to deceive, it is either for pleasure or profit at another person's expence, or from pure malice, with an intention to injure him. Some abandoned men, hackneyed in the worst ways of a wicked world, have said, that the use of words is to conceal and disguise their thoughts; and it is an use that is too often made of them; but only by impostors and hypocrites of different degrees and every profession, from the courtier to the beggar.

Those motives which tempt men to tamper with the truth are always culpable, in a greater or less degree. I do not mean, however, at present, to inveigh against those enormous violations of truth, which ought not even to be named among Christians, such as prevarication and perjury, to the perversion of public justice, and in defiance of the God of heaven.

There are other very criminal vices of the tongue, which are not so rare as these, even among people in other respects refined in their manners and unblemished in their morals; such as calumny, slander, and detraction, in innumerable forms, and various shades of criminality. At present I shall content myself with recommending the virtue of Veracity, animadverting on the minor violations of truth, and dwelling on the duty of speaking the truth in love.

Veracity is the bond of human society. If we could suppose it possible that men were entirely indifferent to truth and falsehood, we must see that government and law, religion and morals, commerce, friendship, and even domestic connexions would be dissolved. There are comparatively few of the concerns of life, which are subject to any other tie or authority. That regard to truth, which induces every man to say what he believes, and to perform what he has promised, strengthened by the contempt and distrust, with which the deceitful man is treated, even by those who have no more regard to veracity than himself, is essential to the very existence of society. If this were wanting, we could depend on nothing that was not subjected to our senses, and did not fall within our personal experience. We could not rely on the report of a friend or neighbour, as to the most trivial or most interesting incidents of life: the periodical accounts of public transactions would deserve no greater credit: the annals of history, instead of being the records of human experience, for our benefit,

would be received with equal incredulity: descriptions of inventions by ingenious men, for the improvement and embellishment of society, and of discoveries by philosophers, would be regarded as fictions and idle tales, calculated only to amuse and impose upon the credulous. Promises, contracts, and oaths, might be committed to the wind. But I feel the ridicule of arguing further on such a supposition. I would rather observe, that this virtue, in its largest sense, includes almost every thing that we understand by principle; and that principles of truth, honour, and integrity, are the characteristics of these nations, and not less of this province than any other district. This, with the independence of mind, and the secure enjoyments of the comforts of life, which are its consequences, compensates for every minor defect or disadvantage in our situation. Other countries may delight the passenger with brighter suns and clearer skies, with more luxuriant productions of the earth, sublimer views of nature, or more exquisite works of art; but *these* are the sterling qualities that ennoble these countries, the peculiar distinctions, which have preserved them in safety and elevated them to dignity among the nations. Let these then be cherished with the fondest affection, and the contrary branded, at all times, with infamy. Let truth, honour, and integrity, the faith that never faileth, that sweareth to its own hurt and changeth not, be prized as the palladium of the state, and the household guardian of our firesides. They will produce commercial credit and national wealth, fill our houses with good things, and enable us to diffuse comfort among the surrounding poor—and they will inspire us with that independence of mind, which will secure the happiness, dignity, and liberty of our country. Look with suspicion and contempt on frivolous accomplishments, meretricious manners, and seducing pleasures. Let fidelity in word and deed, in every trust, duty, and relation; in short, let truth, in its most extended sense, be our ornament, glory, and defence.

Of all these virtues, privileges, and distinctions, let religious truth be the cement and bond; for what else can unite and combine into any consistent and trustworthy principle the veering fancies, the contending passions, and the jarring interests of mankind? How can these be brought to concur in effecting the felicity,

dignity, and virtue, the independence and true glory of a great nation, except they be overawed and put down by the authority of the Supreme Being? Can all the trials and terrors, the temptations and seductions of the world, be overruled by the influence of any ideal principle confined to the mind of man himself? No man can expect this from theory; no man can assert it from experience. When I say that *religious* truth must be the stability of the state, and the true wealth and prosperity of the people, I speak not of philosophical truth or metaphysical belief. On these points the government may differ from the subject, and the subjects among themselves—and they ever will. I speak of moral truth or religious sincerity—the solemn, awful, and overruling sense of the great truths of universal religion, which force themselves upon every devout mind, however bewildered by speculative abstractions—that sun of righteousness, which either dispels the mists of the beclouded mind, or at least penetrates them with a ray of heavenly light. Beware then of belying your moral or religious principles, tampering with sincerity, and forfeiting the independence and integrity of your minds, by compliance with fashion, or submission to authority in religion.

This, also, is a distinguishing characteristic of the lands in which we dwell. With all our frivolous controversies, angry disputes, and ungodly dissensions, we feel a profound conviction of a supernatural direction; and this conviction moderates our passions, controls our evil affections, and strengthens our virtuous principles. There is a sincere and undoubting persuasion of religious truth; an irresistible apprehension of divine displeasure; an animating and sustaining hope of divine favour. Even the diversities of our doctrinal creeds contribute to the same end; for our errors are sanctified by the religious conviction, the moral sincerity, with which they are entertained; and from these conflicting errors, sparks and flashes of faith are elicited. There is more religious truth in the nation, than if all our contending sects should unite in any one system of faith, that was adopted by any church since the days of the apostles; and infinitely more sincerity, than if we all professed to agree in any one opinion. There is a national character, that never could have arisen out of a mere ritual and ceremonial, a religion of implicit faith, spectacle, and procession.

In fact, moral truth or sincerity is inconsistent with uniformity. It necessarily implies a diversity of opinions and sects; and this diversity of sentiment is the firmest support both of civil and religious liberty, which can exist only in company and together. I have no suspicion that our national church, or any Protestant church at this time of day, can be inclined to persecution; but if it were, it would soon be found impossible to gratify this inclination. While so large a portion of the people is actuated by this kind of moral truth, animated with, if you please to call it so, this bigotry, superstition, fanaticism, it is impossible that they should submit to any spiritual domination: and while they are so much divided among themselves, it is equally impossible that they should combine against the religion of the state. Thus the great importance of non-conformity is not only to be traced in the history of our country, but is founded in the nature of man. While the superintending power of government shall keep us all in our several situations, without violating the privileges of any, religious nonconformity will be a harmless principle to the ruler: and while a strenuous and conscientious adherence to religious principle animates the people, *they* also will be secure from despotism, civil or religious.

Having enlarged sufficiently on the great importance of truth, and disclaimed any intention to declaim on the more heinous offences against veracity, I now proceed to point out some of the minor vices of the tongue.

From what has been said, I apprehend it must appear that every deviation from truth, and every attempt at deception, must be more or less blameable. Though they may not lead to any serious consequences, they tend to occasion temporary embarrassment; and even when they have no other tendency than jocular and merriment, they have a pernicious influence on the mind of the speaker, by weakening his regard to Veracity, and preparing him for more dangerous departures from truth.

A person of this description begins with some of those ingenious contrivances, which are calculated to excite merriment even in the person deceived. Encouraged by his success, he proceeds to other experiments of a less innocent character, without any regard to the mortification they occasion. The same levity and vanity will then tempt him to invent some ludicrous tale to the

disadvantage of a friend. By this time he has so far lost his relish for the simplicity of truth, that he seasons every story or description with some extravagant exaggeration or fictitious addition, to make it more palatable to himself and his hearers. The entertainment which he thus affords to the giddy and thoughtless, and the idle gratification of exercising his fancy and imagination, seduce him in the next place to indulge in pure fiction and invention. Being now insensible to the sacred obligation and amiable nature of *Veracity*, he is deterred from calumny and defamation only, by the consequences that may follow to himself and others; and if the pleasure of indulging this pernicious propensity, or any personal interest to be promoted by it, seems to counterbalance their injurious effects, he will readily be betrayed into those more criminal violations of *Veracity*, which are often followed by the most awful results. It is easy to see, that this process can be checked only by a higher degree of moral sensibility, than such a person can be supposed to have at any time possessed, and that even the most delicate moral taste will soon be vitiated by it. Hence, finally, appears the solemn and important duty of watching over the slightest tendency to falsehood in children, even in their sports.

The unaccountable and incalculable train of consequences which follow every artifice, falsehood, and deception, would require a nicer and more curious inquiry, as well as a more prolix disquisition than is suited to the present occasion; and the general truth is sufficiently known. To the attentive observer of human affairs, Providence reads a lesson on it every day. Let no man say, I will perpetrate this single act of fraud; I will practice this one artifice; I will tell this one falsehood—pocket the profits, and all shall be well. No: it may pursue him to his dying hour, and to his grave, descend to his innocent posterity, to generations yet unborn, and be perhaps the only legacy he can bequeath his heirs.

Veracity may be violated by actions as well as by words. As some men “confess God with their mouths, who in works deny him;” so others can impose upon the world without opening their lips. By a primitive mode of dress, an artificial gait and air, or a sanctified deportment, a man may tell lies more effectually than with his tongue; for dissimulation and hypocrisy are

the most systematic breaches of Veracity and fidelity. Other modes of imposing on the world are practical lies; but hypocrisy is practical perjury, for it clothes and cloaks the lie in the garb of religion.

2. "Speak the truth *in love*." Many speak the truth, but not in love; and many speak in love, but not in truth. The apostle requires us to do both. Let us consider them separately.

One man may speak the truth with a worse intention and with a worse effect, than another would utter falsehood. He may speak inconsiderately, unfeelingly, or from vanity; or he may *intend* to wound and mortify; he may reveal truths in malice; he may even declare the truth from a conscientious principle, yet not with love. Now, if through thoughtlessness and folly, you disturb the peace and harmony of a family; if through disregard to the peculiar situation or delicate feelings of a friend, you rashly shock him with the communication of some calamitous event, or unseasonable truth, it is not enough to say in your defence, that it is all true; much less if you do so with a *desire* to hurt and wound some innocent prejudice or amiable partiality; and least of all, when you disclose facts with a view to injure his fortune or blast his character. In this case, truth is justly deemed to be no justification of a libel, but rather an aggravation. A false imputation may be denied or refuted; but truth leaves an indelible stain or an incurable wound. Whether true or false, the individual is injured, and the public peace endangered. "It is immaterial with respect to the essence of a libel, whether the matter of it be true or false, since the provocation and not the falsity is the thing to be punished criminally. When truth is a greater provocation than falsehood, and therefore has a greater tendency to produce a breach of the public peace, then it is certainly true, that the greater truth, the greater libel..... This tendency is the whole that the law considers."—*Blackstone*, vol. iv. p. 150, 151.

Others again speak in love, but not the truth. They are in the habit of saying every thing that is agreeable, but not with sincerity. Without troubling themselves about the truth or falsehood of what they say, or the effect it may have upon the mind or conduct of their friends, they are satisfied if they conciliate their affections, and make them pleased both with their flatter-

ers and themselves ; and this they do sometimes to answer private ends, but often purely from false love and mistaken good will. They forget that our religion requires us not only to speak in love, but to speak the truth, and things whereby we may edify one another.

On these numerous exceptions is founded the common saying, that truth is not to be spoken at all times. This is certain : we are not to speak the truth unseasonably ; but to this we should add—falsehood never. Some trying and puzzling cases may be put ; but they seldom occur, and are to be considered only as exceptions to the general rule, and not as part of the rule itself. They are to be pleaded in extenuation, not in justification ; and I doubt if they can ever entitle us to pardon. One of these cases is, when you are asked an improper question, which you cannot answer without betraying a secret belonging to another, or disclosing some circumstance injurious to yourself, or that may risk the reputation or safety of some indifferent person. Such questions you should refuse to answer. But then you will say, silence has often the same signification with a verbal reply. In such case you may tell the inquisitive person, that the question was improper : that the inquirer had no right to expect satisfaction ; and that you made it a general rule never to answer such questions. Ask him, whether he would reply to such a question himself ; and what he would think of you, if you were to betray the secrets of a friend. Ask him some perplexing question, as our Lord did to the Pharisees ; and if he declines to answer, say unto him—neither tell I you what I did or think. Such, or even severer reproofs, would be well deserved by the impertinent or artful inquirer, and would prevent him from forming any certain conclusion from your refusal to satisfy him. Besides, in the present state of society, few persons are so rude and uncivilized as to put you to this necessity ; and those who are, cannot expect to be treated with any ceremony. Indirect means are more usually employed for this purpose ; and then an indirect and evasive answer will suffice. At all events, say nothing but the truth, and declare the whole truth that any person has a right to expect from you ; for in such cases, a concealment of a part is tantamount to a falsification.

The only exceptions to these rules are those fictitious compositions, by which no person can be deceived, such

as fables and tales, for the instruction of children, and parables for the illustration of some moral or religious truth: allegories for the embellishment of virtue, or those poetical fictions, which are professedly works of imagination. As these are neither calculated for the purposes of deception, nor liable to misconstruction, they come not within the definition of a criminal falsehood. Some object to instructing children by fiction; but the youngest infants appear to understand the little stories contrived for their amusement by their nurses. They afterwards enter with great facility into the meaning of fables, and never conceive that the conversations of dogs, wolves, and lambs, are either real or invented to impose upon them, much less that their teacher is guilty of a lie. NEMO.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 210.)

CHAPTER XIX.

V. 1. He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan.

I understand the words as importing that Jesus travelled to Judea by the Eastern side of the river Jordan. Compare Mark x. 1; John x. 40.—*Newcome*.

The Greek word here rendered *beyond*, with a genitive in the New Testament, seems to have the sense of *near*, *about*; and Schleusner thinks also of *on this side*.—*Hincks' Lexicon*.

Campbell thinks it may mean either *on this side* or *beyond*.

It is probable that Jesus wishing to avoid too near an approach to Jerusalem, instead of passing through Samaria, which was the shortest road, travelled along the bank of the Jordan.

No part of the tribes of Judah or Benjamin, which composed the kingdom of Judea, lay on the east of the Jordan. Bethabara, where John baptized, is, I think, understood to be on the west side of the river; but in John i. 28, it is said to be beyond Jordan.

V. 8. Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives.

To prevent the greater evils which would have arisen from your proneness to sin.

V. 11. All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.

By *this saying* Newcome understands these words, viz. that "it is not good to marry."

"Cannot receive it," means, cannot acquiesce in its justice and propriety.

"To whom it is given." On whom God has bestowed the gift of continence.

V. 14. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Of persons resembling them in disposition ; having their innocence, simplicity, humility, and teachableness.

V. 15. And he laid his hands on them.

The imposition of hands, among the Jews, implied a prayer for the divine blessing, and pointed out the person prayed for. Hence it passed into the Christian church.

V. 17. Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Others read ' Why askest thou me concerning good ? ' referring to the question in the preceding verse ; and Griesbach admits this reading into the text.

" None is originally, essentially, and infinitely good but one." *Newcome.*

V. 21. If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, &c.

If thou art desirous to profess the more perfect religion of the Gospel, and to become one of my followers, go and sell, &c. This refers to the individual whom he addressed, or to those who at that time became disciples of Christ.

V. 23. A rich man shall hardly [Gr. with difficulty] enter into the kingdom of heaven, &c.

V. 24. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, &c.

In the dialects then spoken by the Jews, both Greek and Syriac, the same word signified a *camel* and a *cable*. The latter would here be the more natural interpretation. In Matt. vii. 4, a splinter accords better than a mote with a beam ; and here a cable agrees better than a camel, with the eye of a needle.

" Dr. Lightfoot and others have shewn, that the expression of " a camel," and even of " an elephant going through the eye of a needle," was proverbial ; not denoting impossibility but rareness, with respect to the occurrence of some things, and difficulty with relation to the accomplishment of others."—*Hewlett.*

" Rabbins as well as Arabs were accustomed, in describing an impossibility, or a high degree of improbability, to say, It will not happen before a camel or an elephant has crept through the eye of a needle."—*Michaelis.*

Our Lord's meaning is here qualified by *hardly* ; and in Mark x. 24, by the words, *who trusteth in riches*. In those days it was hardly possible for such a person to become a follower of Christ, as appeared in the case of this young man ; and at present confidence and pride in wealth expose a man to so many temptations, to avarice, oppression, and licentiousness, as to justify similar apprehensions. For " the kingdom of God " does not here mean heaven, but the Gospel or church of Christ ; and " entering into it " denotes the confession of its divine authority, belief in its truths, and the practice of its duties.

These observations are justified by the words of our Lord : " With men this is impossible ; but with God all things are possible," importing that the danger may be averted by divine grace.

V. 25. Who then can be saved ?

The reason of this question is, because the world consists either of persons that are rich, or desirous of becoming so.

" Can be saved : " can place himself in a state of salvation, by entering into thy kingdom here on earth.—*Newcome*.

V. 28. Ye which have followed me in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, &c.

Some place the comma after " regeneration," connecting that word with " followed me."

This representation may have been taken from the Sanhedrim, where the high priest sat attended by the princes of the twelve tribes and the doctors of the Law ; and it meant, that the apostles should in the kingdom of heaven have a distinguished pre-eminence of glory and reward, and a place of honour assigned them near the person of our Lord himself.

By " the regeneration " some understand the general resurrection, others translate it the renovation, and others think it means the state of the church after the ascension. Compare Acts iii. 19—23.

It is proper here to remark once for all, that there are no points or stops, grammatical or rhetorical marks in ancient manuscripts. These were introduced by later editors and translators, according to their idea of the sense. They have therefore no authority. In the present case, *Newcome* and the improved version place a comma before and after, " in the regeneration," leaving the connexion doubtful ; and *Griesbach* only before those words, connecting them with what follows.

Perhaps the following may be the meaning of this text : Ye who have followed me in this my work of regeneration (that is my ministry) shall sit on twelve thrones, when the son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory. This accords with our Lord's words to Nicodemus, John iii. 3, " Except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven ; " and those passages in which christians are styled new creatures, 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15 ; and said to be born again, 1 Pet. i. 23 ; and to have put off the old man, and to have put on the new man, Col. iii. 9, 10.

" Regeneration : new birth ; birth by grace from carnal affections to a Christian life."—*Johnson's Dictionary*.

V. 29. Shall receive a hundred fold, &c.

These expressions import only an ample reward expressed in an Eastern style.

V. 30. But many that are first [called] shall be last ; and the last [called] shall be first.

This verse should commence the next chapter, which is an illustration of it.

The division of Scripture into chapters and verses is a modern contrivance for sake of reference.

CHAPTER XX.

V. 1. For, &c.

The conclusion of the last chapter intimated that the Gentiles, who were called later than the Jews, would often, under the new dispensation, be preferred to them; and this word *for* introduces a parable to point out the manner and reason of this preference.

V. 2. A penny a day, &c.

In the original, *a denarius*, equal to $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. of our money; the daily wages of a labourer, and pay of a soldier in those days. The English penny was of much greater value 250 years ago, when the Bible was translated, than at this day.

V. 3. About the third hour, &c.

The Jewish day began at six o'clock in the preceding evening; but here the first hour of the working day was six in the morning, the third was nine, the sixth twelve, the ninth three, and the twelfth six in the evening, when the next day began. This mode of reckoning time is always to be attended to in reading the New Testament. The twelve dark hours were in like manner divided into four watches: the third of which, 5 in the morning, was called cock-crowing.

"Idle" means unemployed.

V. 15. Is thine eye evil?

That is, Art thou narrow and envious, because I am bountiful,

V. 16. So the last shall be first, &c.

The repetition of this verse at the end of the parable shows, that the parable is connected with the last verse of the preceding chapter. Our Lord's intention in it probably was gradually to dispel the prejudices of his Apostles, and reconcile them to the impartial plan of the Gospel.

In this view of the parable, the Jews are represented by those labourers, whom the householder hired when he went out early in the morning: and the condition of those nations to whom the Gospel was the first Revelation of the divine will is illustrated by labourers, who were introduced into the vineyard at subsequent periods. When the former received their stipulated hire, they had no reason to complain that the latter received as much; for their employer had a right to do what he would with his own. In like manner, the posterity of Abraham had reason to be thankful, that they had been so early taken into favour, that the Almighty had so early and so frequently sent his servants and prophets among them; but they had not the least ground of dissatisfaction on account of the privileges which he afterwards granted to the world at large, especially as the condition of both parties was improved by the Christian dispensation.

This parable, however, gives no encouragement to indolent and dilatory christians, who have stood all day idle, not in the market-place but in the vineyard, though repeatedly invited from their earliest years to labour in the vineyard, and promised a bountiful reward.

V. 20. Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, &c.

A man's cup, both in sacred and profane authors, signifies the portion of good or evil which falls to his lot: John xviii. 11. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

This metaphorical sense of the word baptism is derived from the figurative expressions of the Old Testament, in which afflictions are represented under the notion of great waters passing over and ready to overwhelm a person. In this view of the matter James and John were baptized with Christ's baptism: Acts xii. 2, v. 18, 40, Rev. i. 9.

The words "and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with," are omitted in ver. 22, 23. by Griesbach.

The words "it shall be given to them," are omitted by Griesbach. This omission depends upon the doubtful meaning of a Greek particle, for which see Matt. xvii. 8, and Mark ix. 8 in the Greek. The English reader may see that the insertion or omission of these words makes little difference in the meaning. Our conjunction *but* partakes of the same ambiguity with the Greek particle.

V. 26. But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.

"Your minister," your servant or attendant. This is often the meaning of minister in the New Testament. Luke iv. 20—Acts xiii. 5, and is the usual signification of the Greek word. In the following verse a different word is used, which signifies a menial servant or slave.

V. 28. And to give his life a ransom for many.

The word translated *ransom*, signifies the price paid for the liberty of a slave; and figuratively, any means of deliverance from bondage. Deut. vii. 8. ix. 26. xiii. 5—Neh. i. 10.

V. 30. And, behold, two blind men, &c.

Mark and Luke mention only one blind man cured near Jericho, but Matthew here mentions two; probably one of the beggars was more remarkable than the other, being the son of Timeus. The same remark may apply to similar cases, particularly the Gadarene demoniacs.

V. 31. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace.

Then the multitudes charged them that they might keep silence.

CHAPTER XXI.

V. 1. And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, &c.

Bethany and Bethphage were equi-distant from Jerusalem, fifteen furlongs to the East. John, xi. 18. Bethany was at the foot of the Mount of Olives, which was a Sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem. Acts, i. 12. which is estimated by some at one thousand, and by others, at two thousand paces. The lands, therefore, of

these two villages, were contiguous; and any thing done on the confines might be said to be done, either in Bethphage, according to Matthew, or in Bethany, as in Mark, or in both, as in Luke.

V. 2. Ye shall find an ass tied, &c.

"An ass," the usual substitute for the horse in Judea. Horses were not commonly used in Judea till the time of Solomon, who brought them from Egypt. Kings were forbidden to multiply horses. Deut. xvii. 16; the Jews not being intended for a warlike or conquering people. Magistrates, and those of the royal household, rode upon asses. They were a superior animal to ours.

V. 5. Daughter of Sion. A title of the city of Jerusalem.

V. 8. Spread their garments in the way, others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed, [or strewed] them in their way.

A customary mode of showing respect, 2 Kings, ix. 13.

V. 9. Hosanna to the son of David, &c.

"Hosanna," that is, save now, we beseech thee. A usual mode of benediction or blessing. Hosanna is taken from Psalm cxviii. 25, and stands for the whole Psalm. It was a kind of song usually sung before the feast of tabernacles. At the same time they flourished the branches which they used at that festival, so that these branches got the name of Hosannas. Agreeably to this custom, some understand by these words, "Bring branches in honour of the son of David,"

V. 12. And Jesus went into the temple of God, &c.

"The temple." The outer court of it, called the court of the Gentiles.

"The money changers," who made an oppressive gain of the foreign Jews at the great festivals, by furnishing them with current money,

"Doves," for offerings to God. Luke, ii. 24—Lev. xii. 6.

These money changers dealt in what is now called exchange, accommodating strangers, not only with smaller pieces of coin, but with the money of Judea, for that which they brought from their respective countries. Those small coins were half shekels, one of which every Jew paid to the temple.

V. 19. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, &c.

This was a symbolical or prophetic action, intended to show that unfruitfulness in the Jewish nation, who rejected the Gospel, and in all mere outward professors of it, should share a like fate. Christ also made another use of it, to teach his disciples the power of faith in working miracles. See v. 21.

V. 21. If ye shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, &c.

In these proverbial expressions, examples physically impossible are selected to prevent weak people from understanding them liter-

ally. No man can suppose that a camel can pass through the eye of a needle, or that faith can remove a mountain, or that the persecuted disciple who has suffered loss for sake of Christ, "shall receive a hundred fold in this time, brethren, and sisters, and mothers," &c. as in Mark x. 29. 30. Scripture like all other books must be interpreted consistently with common sense.

The same observation applies to the following verse; "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive." v. 22.

V. 23. Doest thou these things, &c.

Referring to his public entry into Jerusalem, his driving the sellers and buyers from the temple, his miracles wrought in the temple, and his teaching there.

V. 33. And digged a wine-press in it, and builded a tower, &c.

Chardin found wine-presses in Persia, which were hollow places in the ground, lined with stone work: so that they still continue to dig wine-presses in that country.

"Tower," a watch-house to protect the vineyard.

The householder was Jehovah: the vineyard the promised land, which he defended against the surrounding nations: the husbandmen were the Jews: his servants were the prophets: his son was our Lord himself, superior to the prophets, him they slew. The destruction of the husbandmen, means the desolation of Jerusalem; and the new occupiers were the Romans. The subjects alluded to in this parable, are evident from the following texts. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein. Isaiah, v. 1. 2. I have sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. Jer. vii. 25. see also xxv. 4. xxxv. 15. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, Heb. i. 1. 2. who by wicked hands was crucified and slain. Acts, ii. 23. And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof, and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel. Isaiah, v. 5. 6. 7.

V. 42. Did ye never read in the Scriptures, &c.

Does not Psalm cxviii. 22, plainly foretel that the Messiah should be rejected by the Jewish rulers; and that though they crucify him, he shall become the head of the corner, or the head of the church? Now, what else is this, but that he shall be believed on by the Gentiles, and unite them to the church of God, as a head or corner stone unites the two sides of a building? Dr. Macknight.

(To be Continued.)

JOURNAL RELATING TO THE BIRMINGHAM
RIOTS, BY A YOUNG LADY OF ONE OF THE
PERSECUTED FAMILIES.

[For the following interesting document, we are indebted to the *Christian Reformer*. It brings before the mind, in a most affecting manner, the events of an appalling time; and leaves us in doubt which ought most to excite our astonishment: the brutal ferocity of the savage actors in the scene of horror; the supine indifference of the persons entrusted with the preservation of the public peace; or the heroic magnanimity of the principal sufferers. The paper is of greater length than those which are usually inserted in the Bible Christian; but we feel convinced that none of our readers will wish that it had been curtailed or abridged.]

Thursday, July 14, 1791. My father and a few other friends to liberty having previously agreed to celebrate the French Revolution on this day, and this not being approved of by the Church-and-King party, a report was spread that, should they do it, disturbances would ensue. The spirit which raised this report was, perhaps, much increased by a violent hand-bill that appeared a few days before. The friends, were not, however, alarmed by such apparently foolish reports, but persisted in their design. My sister and I walked down to town this morning, and called in our way on Mrs. G. H.—, whom we found under some little alarm from these reports, but we endeavoured to persuade her there was no reason to fear any thing from them. We afterwards called on Mrs. Priestley, whom we found up stairs dressing to go to town; she quite laughed at us for attending to the reports, and said perhaps there might be some few windows broken, but nothing more, she was certain; and that she would readily stand in the shoes of any one who might receive the damage apprehended; but she informed us my father had sent Dr. Priestley a note from town, advising him not to attend the dinner. Mrs. P. walked to town with us: all was quiet. My sister and I dined in New Hall Street, with my uncle's family. During the time the gentlemen were at dinner, we were in some little apprehension, and sent the servant repeatedly to see if all was quiet. A number of people had collected round the hotel, but nothing like a disturbance or riot—all was peaceable. The company broke up at five o'clock, and several of the gentlemen drank tea with us; among the rest was the chairman, Mr. Keer. They were congratulating themselves on the pleasant

and orderly manner in which all had been conducted, and talking over their toasts, and of the different reports that had been circulated. A speech of Mr. J. C.—'s made us laugh heartily : addressing my father, he says, " Well, Mr. R—, I always *thought* God was above the devil, and now I am *sure* of it."—A little after seven o'clock we set off to walk home. My uncle, aunt, and cousins went with us part of the way ; all seemed as quiet and peaceable as possible. My father, as we passed, just called on Dr. P. to tell him how pleasantly all had gone off, and we afterwards stopped to congratulate Mrs. G. H—.

On arriving at our pleasant and peaceful home, we took a walk in the garden to see a charming large conservatory my father had just built for us : during our absence that day the soil had been put in, and it was now just finished and ready for our plants—some already in. How delighted we were with its appearance and the prospect of the interesting and gratifying amusement it would afford us, upon which we hoped to enter on the following morning, little suspecting what the morning would bring forth. As we were at supper, W— T—, our footman, came in with a countenance as pale as ashes, and told my father, a messenger was just arrived to inform him that a mob had collected and set fire to the New Meeting-house, and were then employed in destroying the Old Meeting-house also ; and they declared their intention to come from thence to Dr. Priestley's house, and then to ours,—and that no magistrates appeared or could be found to disperse them. Consternation and alarm now filled our minds. My father ordered his horse, intending to go and meet the mob, and search out the justices to quell it. Whilst he was loading his pocket pistols to carry with him, a chaise drove up to the door, with Dr. and Mrs. Priestley, and Mr. S— R—. The latter had taken the alarm, and, procuring the chaise, had hurried the Doctor and Mrs. P. away from their house, fearing the mob would be there immediately. So great was the panic he had felt and inspired them with, that they had secured nothing, but seemed as if happy and fortunate in escaping with their lives. We all united in begging my father not to leave the house, and urged the danger he would be in by meeting such an ungovernable concourse of people ; and that being alone, he could do nothing towards quell-

ing them; and no doubt but our friends in Birmingham would some of them exert themselves and stir up the magistrates, without his running such a risk. He would, however, hear nothing of it, but declared "he would be his own master that night." Seeing him resolved to go, Mrs. Priestly requested him to bring her a small box of money she had in her chamber, and Dr. P. wished for his pocket-book, which contained something of value, and which he had left on the table in the parlour, so great was their hurry and alarm. My sister and I now wished to secure some of our plate, &c.; this Mrs. P. strenuously opposed, from an idea that the mob must be quelled before they came to our house.

We walked up and down the foot-road leading to town in a dreadful state of suspense and apprehension, clearly discerning the fire from the two Meeting-houses, and distinctly hearing the shouts of the mob. At length my sister and I (our fears every minute strengthening) slipped away, and, hastily putting all our plate into a trunk without even locking the trunk, because in our haste we could not find the key, sent it by two of our own servants to a neighbour's, Mrs. B——, unknown to Mrs. Priestly.

In about three hours my father returned, and informed us he went first to Dr. Priestly's house, where he found William Priestly, whom he instructed to begin and move all the Doctor's manuscripts he thought most likely to be valuable, by means of persons in the neighbourhood whom my father had brought for that purpose, and on whom he could rely, to a place in the vicinity he had fixed upon as secret and secure. This he urged him to do as expeditiously and quietly as possible, and to continue this employ, including also any other valuables he recollected, till my father should send him word to stop, not attending to any reports that might be brought him. My father then rode on to town as far as Digbeth, and there meeting the mob, he tried in vain to proceed. He met many of his friends, all of whom requested him to return, telling him he did not hear the threats that were uttered against him. At length one of them, I believe Mr. J. F——, suddenly turned his horse, and giving him a cut with his whip, the press was so great, and the spirit of the horse so roused, my father found himself obliged in a manner to return. Arriving at Dr. Priestley's gate before the mob,

he stationed himself within-side till the mob came up, and then addressed them, endeavouring to induce them by fair words and money, to desist and return home. At first, they seemed a little pacified and inclined to listen, till one more loud than the rest, and who had the appearance of a ringleader, cried out, "Don't take a six-pence of his money; in the riots of '80, in London, a man was hanged for only taking six-pence." They all then vociferated, "Stone him, stone him!" and began to fling stones. My father then, finding it rashness to brave two or three thousand men, turned his horse, and rode up to the house, telling W. P. that he must desist and take as much care of the house as he could, and advising him to make all the doors and windows as secure as possible. He then rode home, and informed us he did not think our house yet in danger, but thought we had better remove with Dr. and Mrs. P. to Mr. T——H——'s about half-a-mile off for fear we should be suddenly surprised. During this time, several messages were sent, and friends came to warn us of our danger. All seemed to apprehend the mob would visit us, and we had been advised to set out a barrel of ale on the lawn, thus attempting to pacify them and persuade them to desist. This done, and proper persons left to watch, we all walked up to Mr. H——'s; here we found the family up, and under great apprehension; and here we soon heard the shouts of the mob at Dr. Priestley's house, (and I shall never forget what dreadful and hideous shouts they were,) intermingled with a loud noise of battering against the walls, and such a confusion of cries, huzzas, &c. as cannot be imagined. Soon the flames burst forth, and then all seemed quiet. What were the emotions of our minds at this moment no one can imagine, unless they had beheld our countenances, and heard the broken, short sentences that formed all the conversation which passed amongst us: yet the extreme agitation of our minds did not prevent us from admiring the divine appearance of the excellent Dr. Priestly. No human being could, in my opinion, appear in any trial more like divine, or show a nearer resemblance to our Saviour than he did then. Undaunted he heard the blows which were destroying the house and laboratory that contained all his valuable and rare apparatus and their effects, which it had been the business of his life to collect and use. All this apparatus, together with

the uses he had made of them, the laborious exertions of his whole life, were being destroyed by a set of merciless, ignorant, lawless banditti, whilst he, tranquil and serene, walked up and down the road with a firm yet gentle pace that evinced his entire self-possession, and a complete self-satisfaction and consciousness, which rendered him thus firm and resigned under the unjust and cruel persecution of his enemies; and with a countenance expressing the highest devotion, turned as it were from this scene, and fixed with pure and calm resignation on him who suffered the administration of this bitter cup. Not one hasty or impatient expression, not one look expressive of murmur or complaint, not one tear or sigh escaped him; resignation and a conscious innocence and virtue seemed to subdue all these feelings of humanity.

About four o'clock my father returned and informed us, that as the fire had consumed the doctor's house, the mob were nearly dispersed, half drunk, having been up to their ancles in wine in his cellar, where they had broke the necks off all the bottles, and inundated the cellar with that portion of their contents they could not drink,—that the fields round were now covered with these fiends sleeping from drunkenness and fatigue, and that, as the day was now come, he thought it most likely they would disperse entirely, and that consequently we might return home again. Accordingly we set off, and never shall I forget the joy with which I entered our own gates once more. That our house was spared I was grateful beyond measure; it seemed as an old dear friend restored to life from a dangerous disorder. I rejoiced also because it enabled us to afford an asylum to our exemplary fellow-sufferers. On entering that house thus so inexpressibly and so endeared to us, we began to think of rest. A room was prepared for the Doctor and Mrs. P. We all looked and felt all gratitude; but the Doctor appeared the happiest amongst us. Just as he was going to rest, expressing his thankfulness in being permitted to lie down again in peace and comfort, my father returned from Fairhill and brought the sad intelligence that they were collecting again and their threats were more violent than ever, that they swore to find Dr. P. and take his life. The chaise was now ordered with all speed, and instead of the much-desired rest, the Doctor and Mrs. P. were obliged to dress

again and get into it, scarcely knowing whither to go. Mr. R—— accompanied them, and it was thought most advisable to take a by-road to Heath, where Mrs. Finch, the Doctor's daughter, lived, near Dudley. Thus suddenly were our prospects changed! We now set to packing our beds, furniture of all sorts, and clothes, &c. The neighbourhood had by this time become all alarmed for us, and our poor neighbours for miles round were coming all through the day, requesting to assist us in packing and to carry some of our things to their cottages, in order to secure them for us. Our house was filled with people from top to bottom, some packing one thing, some another, some hiding things about our own premises, others taking them to a barn fixed upon as a place of safety and secrecy, and others again to their own homes, and thus endangering themselves by a risk of their being discovered, and suffering, in consequence, from the blind fury of the mob. These honest creatures bewailed our hard and undeserved lot much more than we did ourselves, though they did not feel it so much; and all of them voluntarily laboured and exerted themselves as much as if their own lives depended upon the saving our goods. By ten o'clock our house was nearly stripped, and its furniture scattered about the country. We now ran over to Mrs. B——'s, there took breath a little, and at her request some refreshment, and her affectionate solicitude caused us the relief and luxury of shedding tears, which agitation, hurry, and fatigue had hitherto prevented. Soon, however, did we return home, desirous to remain there as long as possible. Parties of the mob were constantly coming to the gates, but persons were stationed there to appease and send them away. We now heard that they were gone through the town to Mr. J—— R——'s, and this again gave us hope that our house might be spared; but my father much urged my brother, sister, and me to leave, and recommended our going to a neighbour's, who lived in a retired spot about half a mile off. He wished himself to remain at the house as long as possible. Accordingly, we loaded ourselves with cold meat, pies, &c. and set off, intending to take up our quarters there till all was over, thinking we should be near to hear how things went, and could profit by circumstances as they arose. As we passed across the fields, we were alarmed by parties of men in their shirt sleeves, without hats, all half drunk;

they were breaking the boughs from the trees and hedges, shouting, laughing, swearing and singing, in a manner that seemed hideous beyond expression. After much alarm, and frequently hiding ourselves behind the hedges and trees, we at length arrived at the place of our destination. We found our good neighbour Mrs. G—— very ready to receive us, though we had never been on any thing of a sociable footing with her. Her house was a superior sort of cottage, and here we hoped to find an asylum till the storm was overblown. My father came and dined with us ; he seemed full of hope that our house would escape, but was much distressed at not being able to get any communication with his friends at Birmingham. He had sent several notes to my uncle and other friends, as well as to the magistrates, but could get no answer. After dinner he went to town himself, having left the necessary directions for protecting the house ; in the evening he returned to us, much hurt at the behaviour of the magistrates, and told us he could no longer think us safe there, but wished us to go to the house of B—— C——, an old servant, who lived about five miles off, situate in a very obscure place ; and as no time was to be lost, he requested we would set out on foot, whilst he went home and sent the coach after us ; for there all our servants remained to take what care they could of what was left. Now the females all left it, the cook excepted, who remained to the last, and showed a degree of courage and spirit that astonished all who saw it. Walking up the common, we passed Mr. A——'s, a neighbour with whom we had been upon friendly terms, but who was of the Church-and-King party, and had refused to shelter a waggon load of our goods in his barn, saying, he did not choose to risk his barn to save them ; thus letting his poor illiterate neighbours outdo him in real friendship and charity. As we passed, he, with Mrs. A., &c. were on the lawn, and they had the assurance to accost us and express sorrow for our trouble. We received their compliment with coolness, and pursued our way ; the carriage overtook us when we had proceeded about two miles, and my father with it. The evening was far advanced when we arrived at B. C——'s, and on alighting we found even this obscure farm-house had been threatened, because there had been through the summer something of a Sunday-evening's lecture held there, and also

because it was reported some of our goods were collected here. It was true, that two waggon loads had been sent, but they had been removed further up the country. The carriage was left here; the coachman returned on one of the horses, and B. C. on the other; the former to strengthen the guard at our house, the latter to return in a short time and bring us information of the state of things. Mrs. C., formerly a servant in our family as well as her husband, was sincerely rejoiced to see us, and to have her house afford us an asylum. We took possession of an inner parlour, and meant to remain there concealed from any neighbours who might enter. A faithful little dog, who had accompanied us almost without our knowledge, seemed to be sensible of our plan; for he stationed himself at this parlour door almost as soon as we entered it, and when any person came near, barked most violently: he soon got familiar with the different members of the family, and would suffer them to pass and repass quietly, but was really furious if any stranger entered the house and approached at all near the door; and this he continued all the time we remained here. At one o'clock in the morning B. C. returned, but the account he brought only increased our fears; the matter seemed to be without end; Mr. Ryland's house was gutted and set fire to; also Mr. Hutton's; and the mob were then at Mr. Taylor's, where they were committing the most inhuman depredations. My father now thought it right to go again himself and try if the magistrates could not by some means be persuaded to act. We did what we could to dissuade him from it, not now fearing for any thing so much as his safety; and as there is no answering for the fury of a mob, and some envious, malicious spirits had, we knew, spared no pains to inflame them against my father, our apprehensions for him when absent from us were cruel, for we were well aware that his active and bold, daring spirit might lead him into danger before he was sensible of it. This we represented to him, and urged him as much as we could to remain in safety with us, but all in vain; go he would, promising to return soon. We did not think of going to bed or even taking off our clothes through the night, though this was the second we had passed in this state. To think of sleep or quiet was impossible in our state of mind, and all about us in the same agitation with

ourselves. Things had gone so far and come to such a height, that the general security seemed in danger, pillage appeared the order of the day, and all parties now most likely would be involved. There was continual coming and going to this house, and we were tormented by a thousand reports, all sad, all distressing; which of them to believe we could not divine, and therefore suffered more or less from them all.

The next morning, Saturday, about ten o'clock, our friend and neighbour, Sarah S—— came on foot and alone; she had left her brother and sister with their children at a house on the common, and strolled hither herself for want of accommodation there. Mr. H. had left his house, having heard it was on the list of those to be pulled down. From S. S. we heard many sad reports; the town and country was all under the greatest alarm, and all order and subordination seemed at an end. We received every now and then accounts that parties of the mob were on the road; sometimes they were said to be very near, coming to demolish the house we were in; at others, they were going to Kingshood Meeting-house, about two miles from us.—About twelve o'clock in the day, poor Mrs. H—— came, such a picture of fatigue and distress as I never saw before—a delicate little woman, without hat or cloak, in her nightcap, with a child on one arm, and a large bundle under the other; she came in almost breathless, threw herself on a chair and nearly fainted; it was a long time before she could speak; at length we learned from her that Mr. H. had gone off in disguise, and that she hurried from her house, having had information that the mob were very near. It was now near twelve hours since my father had left us; he promised to return soon; every thing conspired to raise our fears for him: the state of acute and fearful apprehension in which our minds had been ever since he left us cannot be imagined nor told; every minute since he left us appeared an age of cruel suspense. I thought if I could but once more see him safe, I should not care for the house, or even the whole town, or any thing else. We sent B. C.; he returned without getting any intelligence of him, except that he had been at home, but the servants did not know where he then was, they believed at Birmingham. This was far from quieting our apprehensions; yet had we no remedy but patience and resignation,

This was, sure, the longest morning I ever knew; we were strolling about the fields, listening to every sound that rose upon our ears, and with all the anxiety imaginable eyeing every person who appeared; and every noise we heard, every creature we saw, gave rise to a thousand thoughts and surmises. About one o'clock Mr. T—— L ——'s family arrived; they fled here for safety, and brought like all others, the most alarming accounts.

About two o'clock, to our inexpressible joy, my father returned, but so changed by fatigue and alarm, that his countenance was not at all like the same. He had been at Birmingham, trying to rouse the magistrates to exertion, and had met with such indifference from them, as in the present state of things seemed almost incredible, and quite unnatural. His friends were all dispersed, he could find none of them; a general panic had scattered them, and nothing was to be done but to submit. Having been thus disappointed at Birmingham, and finding it was impossible for him alone to do any thing, he had returned home again, and remained there defending the house against parties of the mob who were continually coming to assault it, till, after having long disregarded the urgent entreaties of the servants and the friends there to leave, from their lively apprehensions for his safety, he was obliged to yield to them on receiving a message from a very respectable gentleman of the other party, who sent a friend privately to request of my father, if he valued his life, to quit his house and secrete himself, for the fury of the mob had become quite ungovernable. He now, therefore, thought it his duty to resign his premises to their fate and save himself. Accordingly he came to us, and hearing on the road that the house we were in was threatened, he ordered the coachman to follow with the horses to take us farther off. Although my father was so much exhausted by the fatigue he had undergone, that his countenance was altogether quite changed, yet we felt now really happy to find him again with us, and seemed to care for nothing; we persuaded him to take a little refreshment, and he then thought it right to take his horse and ride on to the White Lion at Alcester, where he desired us to follow as soon as the coach should arrive, which, he said, could not be long. This we gladly consented to do, and were willing that my father thus consented to quit this scene of horror. This afternoon,

however, was not spent with much less anxiety than the morning, for the coachman never came till ten o'clock, and we were not only distressed from our apprehension of what might be the cause of his delay, but still more so because we feared my father would now feel as much anxiety for us as we had done for him in the morning, for he would naturally fear that the arrival of the mob at B. C.'s had prevented our leaving, and would consequently fear for our safety. Though there were many persons in the house, our party consisted only of ourselves and Sarah S——. All the afternoon were we wandering about, listening and fearing, as in the morning; often did we express a wish to each other that we could but set off and walk to Alcester; but we did not know the road, and to venture so far, seven miles, now when all parts of the country seemed infested by a set of demons, seemed to us impossible,—besides that the exhausted state in which we felt ourselves seemed to render it impossible. I felt very ready to undertake it, nay, even on my own account desirous, though a sort of fear arose that we should not get through, as we were all so extremely fatigued. It was now Saturday morning; these sad disturbances had begun on Thursday, since which time we had not had our clothes off; we had undergone much fatigue in packing the furniture, and since then in having been almost constantly on our feet, wandering in search of peace and security; nothing like rest either of body or mind had we tasted in all this time, but quite the opposite, and that in no common degree: but the fatigue of our bodies was much surpassed by the agitation and distress of our minds. About seven o'clock in the evening, we perceived a cloud of smoke arise from that quarter which almost amounted to a certainty with us to be our house in flames. Hence, we suppose, sprung the coachman's delay. Now a sort of melancholy filled our bosoms, hitherto torn by lively and different apprehensions. To contemplate the awful columns of smoke ascending from that beloved mansion where I had passed all my days in a calm, a virtuous and a happy tranquillity, where all my pleasure seemed to centre, and where alone I felt as if happiness could be tasted, pierced me to the soul:—it seemed as if a dear friend was expiring before me in whom my happiness centred. My whole soul was moved and distressed, but the luxu-

ry of tears was denied: spent and exhausted, my feelings, though not violent, were acute and quiet.

In this state we continued, looking towards the smoke, and wandering up and down the garden till ten o'clock, till all of a sudden the dreadful shouts of the mob assailed our ears, and almost at the same instant two women came running as if for their lives and quite out of breath; they begged us for God's sake to get away, for that the mob were coming, they would be there immediately, and their fury was ungovernable. Such a scene of confusion now followed as cannot be told; all ran about as if not knowing what to do or where to go; there were seven or eight young children in the house, some were wrapped up in blankets, others taken from their beds as they were, all ran out of the house, but knew not whither to turn their steps. Poor Mrs. C.— had two young children of her own to take care of, and her eldest was of an age to be in part sensible of his danger, but not able to strive against it, and his piteous moans and agitation much added to the distress of his mother.

In a few minutes after the alarm was given, my brother, sister, Sarah S.— and myself, set off to walk to Alcester, apparently with as much spirit and strength as we ever had in the whole course of our lives, set off upon the most agreeable walk; hedges, ditches and gates, nothing stopped us; all we surmounted with an agility inconceivable; for some distance we ran as fast as possible. The continued and increased shouts of the mob strengthened us most wonderfully; at length we got into the public road, and were there soon stopped in our career, by hearing a party of men on horseback galloping full speed; we stopped and hid ourselves under a hedge, till they had passed, and by their conversation found they belonged to the mob: they were in liquor, and swore dreadfully as they passed the place we were concealed in, and we heard one of them distinctly say, “I know there is a d—d Presbyterian somewhere hereabouts, we'll have him before morning.” This, we had no doubt, applied to my father, and our fears for him, consequently, increased. They galloped on, and we came from our lurking-place and continued our route; but as these ruffians were going towards my father's, we feared they might meet him on the road, as it was possible he might return to see for us. We had not

proceeded far before these men stopped their horses, and we not perceiving it, and coming on our way, were almost upon them before we were sensible of it; but as the moon shone uncommonly bright, and we thought it impossible but they must see us, it seemed most prudent to continue on quietly as if we did not notice them; had we left the road it might have excited suspicion; accordingly, we passed them; they looked hard at us but said nothing, and presently galloped up and re-passed us, then stopped their horses till we again passed them, and this they continued to do in such a manner, that each of us was alive to secret apprehension. No other person was to be seen, and no house appeared in sight; three young girls walking at that time of night, with no other protection than a boy, might find cause for apprehending insult at any time, but in our state of mind and in the present state of the country, how much must these fears be increased! My brother and our faithful little dog was all the protection we had. We continued on thus for about three miles, marching with a firm pace, but with almost a dead silence: the moon shone uncommonly bright, the shadows it cast were therefore unusually strong, and almost every shade from a tree or bush startled us. The men on horseback were sometimes by our side, sometimes out of sight, behind us, sometimes before; their intentions we feared, and our situation powerfully aided our apprehensions. After a little time we now heard a horse coming after us, and were at the first alarmed, but afterwards relieved by finding it was our own servant, who had gone to C's, and not finding us there, had rode on after us. He informed us of the truth of our conjectures, for that our house was burnt, and all the gardens and premises most dreadfully laid waste. Though he brought us this sad intelligence, we were all truly relieved to see him and to keep him with us a guard from these men. Shortly after we met my father in the greatest distress; his fears for us had almost distracted him; he had set out to meet us, and by some unlucky chance his horse had got away from him, and to get him again had taken him a long time, and almost exhausted his remaining strength; he had just caught him as we came up, and our meeting was joyful and happy, though under such sad circumstances. My father now sent the servant back, with orders to have our chaise sent to

meet us at Stratford, as he had resolved to go straight up to London and remonstrate with Mr. Pitt on these outrageous proceedings. My father now accompanying us, we now continued our route comparatively speaking with pleasure, for the men had gone on before us since William joined us, and we saw nothing more of them. We now passed several houses, at the door of each the family was collected in a solemn sort of silence; they all gazed at us as we passed; not a word was spoken, except sometimes by some of them in a whisper. We held our peace, not knowing whether any we might address or put any questions to, were friends or enemies. In about half an hour, we met an honest and respectable farmer, a brother to one of my father's tenants, who had heard of our being in the neighbourhood, and had set out to see for and assist us; he accompanied us the remainder of our walk, and when we arrived at the end of the seven miles, which in the afternoon we had imagined it quite impossible for us to accomplish, we found ourselves sufficiently strong to walk another seven. On entering our inn, we were much disturbed to find it was filled with riotous people, and to observe, just before we came up, the very same men who had tormented us, go in before us. We found here my father's tenant, the brother of the man who met us, and on relating to him the circumstance of the men who had followed us, we requested him to go into the kitchen and see if he knew them, or could gather anything from their conversation: this he did, and in a short time returned, informing us he knew them, and that one of them was the most violent man in all the county, and a most profligate creature. This being the case, we could not think of remaining here, lest they should discern my father, and begged he would permit us to walk on to Alcester, eight miles further, where we could get a hired chaise and proceed to Stratford. At first he would not hear of it, but insisted upon our staying there and taking some rest and refreshment, as a good supper and beds were provided: though so much exhausted, yet in our state of mind these were no temptations to us; I felt able to walk twenty miles further, and would infinitely rather have done it than have remained in that house. The Mr. G.— we had first met requested we would go on to his house, about two miles further off, and wait there whilst he went to Alcester and brought

a chaise to us. This was determined upon, when, just as we were setting off, up came our coach, which had been left at B. C.'s, with Mr. L.'s family in: this was very fortunate; they took possession of the rooms and supper that had been prepared for us, and we got into our coach, drawn by a pair of horses, neither of which had ever been in a carriage before, and the tenant we had met at this house for a coachman, who had never drove a carriage before. Our faithful little dog, as if fearful of being left behind, jumped into the carriage before us, and we all stepped in, thinking it the greatest luxury we had ever enjoyed. We arrived safe at Mr. G.—'s, and he not being arrived with the chaise, we took some refreshment offered us by the good lady, and at her earnest request went up stairs to get a little repose. Here, a curious scene presented itself; we three ladies were shewn into a room with four beds in all, and all but one whether occupied by men or women we did not know; but the loud nasal concert, and the different notes of which it was composed, seemed to indicate both: we were amused at our situation, and felt sufficiently at ease to laugh at it. We lay down upon the bed, and our faithful little dog by the side; but the room was suffocatingly hot and the number of persons in it made the air very oppressive: this, together with the music that assailed our ears, and a most numerous swarm of fleas, which attacked us all, kept rest and even quiet at a distance.

In about an hour, Mr. G. brought the chaise, and my father, brother, and sister and I got into it. S. S. learned of Mrs. G. that her sister and family were within half a mile of this place; she therefore went to them. We soon arrived at Stratford, and found there Mr. G. H.'s family; but as it was now about four o'clock in the morning, and they were all gone to rest, we only saw Mr. G. H. for a few minutes, and then got into our chaise, which our coachman had brought, and committing our faithful little dog to his care, we four set off about five o'clock on Sunday morning with hired horses for London, and never got out till we arrived there, my father excepted. The cause of his alighting was an alarm; all the day we rode in a sort of suspense and fear that kept us all pretty quiet; every person who overtook us we fancied regarded us with a distrustful sort of curiosity, and each we feared was looking for

my father, though why we scarcely knew. Soon after we left Maidenhead, which was on Sunday night, we observed our post-boy drove us very strangely, sometimes taking one side of the road, sometimes the other, crossing backwards and forwards perpetually; every now and then he seemed asleep, and then, as if just waking, drove like mad; at length we got much alarmed, and my father got out to see what could be done. He walked by the side for some time, conversing with him and endeavouring to make him drive steadily; but seeing plainly he was not in a situation to be trusted, my father at length persuaded him to let him try his hand at driving, and made him get off and sit upon the seat in front. Thus were we relieved from a cruel state of fear. At length we came to that place so noted for robbers, Maidenhead Thicket, and just as we entered it, the mail-coach overtook us. My father thought it would be a good security to keep up with it, and therefore drove accordingly; but as it was necessary to drive pretty fast in order to do this, our drunken guest had somewhat to do to keep his seat, and, added to this, was very angry to have his horses-drove so hard; he clenched his fist, called and swore, but all in vain; we galloped on, in fear every moment of the fellow's falling under the wheel, and also under some little expectation of robbers. Though we thought it likely we might be attacked, none of us felt at all alarmed, and had they come, such was our state of mind, I am convinced we should have met them with even cheerful calmness: as for myself, I seemed fully to expect them, but did not feel as if it was any thing to be at all alarmed at. We had some rings and other valuables about us, which we had in our haste put in our pockets; these we hid in our hat-crowns and shoes; however, we got safe through the Thicket, and when nearly arrived at Henley-upon-Thames, my father suffered the postilion to mount again, who by this time was pretty well sobered.

On this morning, Monday, July 18th, about seven o'clock, we arrived at Bates's Hotel in the Adelphi, the house we were accustomed to be at in town. Mr. Bates was not up, but soon rose and came to meet us with tears in his eyes, so happy was he to meet us; he had heard reports of the disturbances and was truly relieved to see us all safe. On sitting down here, for the first time since Thursday had we thought ourselves safe or

at rest. Now we found both, and the greatest refreshment from washing off the dust and filth from our skins, and in changing our clothes. My father soon waited upon Mr. Pitt, and very soon after arriving we learned that Dr. P. was in town, as well as Mr. J. R.—'s family, and many others of our Birmingham friends. This evening we went to bed very early, and enjoyed it in such a manner as cannot be imagined; soon after getting to sleep we were awakened by what we thought most terrible shouting; we jumped up, crying out the mob had followed us; we rose up and in a great alarm slipped on our cloaks, and went out to see how matters were; we found the servants, who in turns sat up thro' the night; they informed us that it was as quiet as usual, and we need not be at all alarmed, for the noise we had heard was only the gardeners coming to Covent Garden Market. Thus happily relieved, and smiling at our own fears, we returned to comfortable rest.

After staying a few days in London, we returned to Birmingham, my father, sister and self; Thomas remained there at school. Nothing material occurred upon the journey, but the sentiments I felt on approaching dear Showell Green, and first beholding the ruin of our much-loved mansion, I shall not forget. At a distance of two or three miles we discerned the spot, and on a nearer approach descried a part of the shell of the building rearing its head, blackened by smoke, despoiled of its windows, and so defaced and demolished as scarce to leave a trace of its original form. The fine tall elms that grew at the back of the house, which shaded our nursery windows, and which I loved almost as if they were my sisters, still stood; they reared their venerable heads above these melancholy ruins, but had partaken in their fate, their fine foliage was all burnt on the side next the house, and their stems blackened by smoke. What dismal feelings filled my soul on contemplating this sad spectacle! It seemed as if I viewed the distorted and mangled corpse of a dear friend, a parent to whom I was indebted for much of my past happiness, and who could never again be restored to me. Passing on, we beheld Mr. G. Humphries's house, the shell complete, but despoiled of all its windows. Dr. P.'s was as melancholy a piece of ruin as our own. Arriving at New Hall Street, we met a hearty welcome from our friends there, and took up our residence under the hos-

pitiable roof of my good uncle, till my father could procure a house for us. All I saw, felt and observed, seemed like a dream, and it was a long time before I could realize what had passed.

PATERNAL REFLEXIONS.

"The revolution of the seasons, the return of the festival, the repetition of stated occupations, revive the images of departed friends."

The circling year hath brought again
The inauspicious day,
When stubborn fate untimely tore
My blooming babe away !

And yet, that lovely image stands
As full before my view,
As when, in life, the real form
Close to my breast I drew.

And deep impress'd, those speaking eyes
With pleasure beaming bright,
Whene'er my coming footsteps cross'd
My threshold, in the night.

And still, that busy prattling tongue
Sounds safety in mine ear,
Whose artless accents lull'd my griefs,
And lighten'd many a care.

And yet the tread of that light foot
I sometimes seem to hear,
Which often pac'd in playful mood,
At even, around my chair.

But oh ! those eyes are sunk and dark !
That tongue gone to decay !
And mould'ring fast those little feet,
In damp and chilly clay.

Yet, cheering thought ! my babe hath pass'd
Earth's weary toils and pains ;
Hath well escap'd its crooked ways,
With all it's blots and stains ;

And, far above all earthly cares,
And earthly joys, hath risen ;
And now, a raptur'd Seraph bright,
Hath spent ONE YEAR in Heaven.

THE REV. ALEXANDER M'EWEN, AND THE CON-
GREGATION OF BALLYHEMLIN.

[We have received the following letters for the purpose of insertion in the Bible Christian. They will serve to lay open to the public the abuse and annoyance to which those individuals are subject, who leave, for conscience' sake, the congregations of the Synod of Ulster, and unite themselves with Unitarian worshipping societies.

We beg to state that the names of the person to whom Mr. M'Ewen's letter was addressed, and of the "member of Ballyhemlin congregation" who replies to it, are known to us, and we are authorized to communicate them to any one who applies in a respectful manner.

Mr. M'Ewen's letter, *in his own hand writing*, can be produced, if required.]

LETTER NO. I.

*From the Rev. Alexander M'Ewen, to a member of the
Congregation of Ballyhemlin.*

Lake-View, April 28th, 1835.

Mr.—

SIR,—Anticipating, some years ago, from your close intimacy with some sceptics in this neighbourhood, the danger of Paul's prophetic remark, 1 Cor. xv. 23, being fulfilled in you, I lent you Stewart of Andover's unanswered and unanswerable pamphlet against Channing, and also Jones on the Trinity, (that I might, if possible, be the means, under God, of establishing you in the faith once delivered to the saints.) The former I got from you, the latter I have not.

As you have since realized my worst fears, too ominously and too well expressed by the Apostle of the Gentiles, 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4, by identifying yourself with the Unitarians of this neighbourhood, who deny the Godhead of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity; you can, of course, no longer require Jones to establish you in principles that your forefathers and yourself once preferred. I therefore require the book from you.

Mr.—I have done my duty to you, I am free from the guilt of your APOSTACY. YOUR BLOOD BE UPON YOUR OWN HEAD. Mark it, Sir, there is a day coming, Malachi, iv. 1. wherein you and I will unquestionably know the truth of that text, Col. ii. 9. Yes, Sir, and the truth of that awful intimation, Luke, xii. 9, "He that denieth me, (and stripping Christ of his names, titles, and attributes is a virtual denial of him,) before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." I entreat you beware that you are not bringing yourself

within the compass of this condemnation, and of the characters described by Peter, 2 Epistle, iii. 3, and by Jude, Gal. Epistle, 10, 12, 13.

That you may be saved, by a speedy repentance, from the state of the unbelievers mentioned Rev. xxi. 8; and that I may not be called upon as a witness against you for having rejected the testimony of God, when you and I stand at the bar of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the day of the dreadful accountability, is the prayer of

Your sincere friend and well-wisher,

ALEXR. M'EWEN.

P. S. I would have spoken to you personally for Jones, but you look of late to look upon me like an evil genius, from whom you turn with fierce eyes and averted look. I am not conscious of any just cause why the common civilities of life might not have subsisted between us.

A. M.

LETTER NO. II.

To the Rev. Alexander M'Ewen, from a member of the Remonstrant Congregation, of Ballyhemlin.

SIR,—As in the above letter you have openly charged the religious community with which I am so happy as to be connected, with “scepticism and “Apostacy,” I think it would not be proper to permit such charges to pass unanswered.

The person to whom your letter is addressed is a respectable and intelligent member of the Remonstrant congregation, of Ballyhemlin. The opinions which he holds were adopted by him on a calm conviction of their truth. Many of his friends and neighbours have already adopted similar views; and he has the happiness of seeing these opinions spreading rapidly from day to day.

It seems, however, that this rapid spread of truth is not so pleasing to you as it is to others. Nay, I fear that it has even ruffled (difficult task!) your placid temper, and put to flight your liberality and benevolence. However, your present apparent deficiency in these Christian graces would not merit notice, were it not that you have been hurried into the impropriety of committing to paper those reviling accusations against your neighbours, with which you have long been in the habit of ornamenting your sermons. This is, no doubt, a most unhappy piece of rashness; as it exposes to the public view the errors of judgment and the lamentable failures of memory to which you are so subject.

As you cannot, however, expect that this letter addressed to one member of a religious community, and filled with abuse and misrepresentation of all the rest, should be passed over as a mere oratorical flourish, meaning nothing,—I suppose that you will not think it very strange if an humble member of that congregation should reply to your false accusations against his fellow-worshippers and himself.

You begin your letter by referring to some friends of the person to whom you write, whom you think fit to call “sceptics.” Do you know, Sir, what is the meaning of the word sceptic? It is one who doubts or denies the Bible. Now I call upon you in the name of the individual addressed, and in the names of his friends, to mention publicly the “sceptics” to whom you refer. If, after this challenge, you refuse to name the sceptics of whom you speak, I shall conclude that your accusation is unfounded. You refer, no doubt, to the number of respectable men, who being disquieted by the intolerance and bigotry of your principles, and tired of the continual abuse and misrepresentation of your neighbours, with which your sermons are filled, have deserted your meeting-house, and united themselves with the Remonstrant congregation, of Ballyhemlin. These men you know that you dare not accuse openly, and by name of scepticism; but you think that you may venture to make general misrepresentations without any danger of exposure. You are now caught, however, beyond the possibility of escape. I have called upon you publicly, distinctly, solemnly, to name the persons whom you call sceptics. If you name them they shall answer for themselves. If you cannot name them, all men, of all parties, will see that you have written that which is not true. The text of scripture which you have quoted here has no reference whatever to the subject of your letter, and therefore I would charitably suppose that your memory has failed. The text is, 1 Cor. xv. 23. “But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming.” Pray, what has this to do with your rash and foolish charge of infidelity, against the members of the congregation of Ballyhemlin? What a confused mind the man must have who would quote such a text, for such a purpose!

Your next remark is as erroneous as your charge of scepticism is false; but it has the advantage of being

rather entertaining, because of its superior absurdity. You say that the person to whom you write has realized your worst fears "too, too ominously, and *too well expressed* by the apostle of the Gentiles." May I venture to ask, Rev. Sir, what you mean, or if you mean anything, by stating that the apostle of the Gentiles has expressed himself "*too well*?" To mere human reason the expression would seem to be sheer nonsense. In 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4, to which you refer, the apostle declares, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap up for themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables." Now, Sir, do you not perceive that this prophesy applies not to Remonstrants or Unitarians; but to Calvinists, and Creed-worshipers, and "Confession of Faith" men. These have, indeed, "turned away their ears from the truth;" that is, they have deserted the scriptures, and "they have been turned unto fables;" that is, they receive as true, and the attempt to force upon the consciences of others, human compositions that are false, self-contradictory, and anti-scriptural. Does not every one know that the Remonstrants separated themselves from the Synod of Ulster, just because they would not turn away from the words of inspiration, and adopt the wretched fables with which the "Confession of Faith" is filled? Does not every one know that if they had consented to turn aside, as you and others have done; and deserting the pure word of God, preferred the Westminster Confession of Faith, they would have been still in connexion with those who mis-call themselves Orthodox? But they chose rather to suffer abuse, misrepresentation, and persecution, than join with those "teachers" of whom the apostle speaks, who seek popularity by deserting the truth, and turning aside to fables.

As to the silly accusation which you bring forward, about deserting the religion of one's forefathers, it is unworthy of notice. Go far enough back in the list of your own forefathers, and you will certainly find Roman Catholics, and (as I presume you cannot trace your descent from any of the tribes of Israel,) even Pagans and Idolators among them. Do you mean to hold by the religion of your forefathers? If so, you must give up Presbyterianism and Christianity.

But your next sentence requires something more than irony and scorn. It merits severe and grave rebuke. In this place you have ventured openly to charge your former hearer, and through him the religious society of which he is a member, with the crime of APOSTACY. Wretched, miserable and most presumptuous man! why do you permit your violent passions thus to transport you beyond all the bounds of reason, justice and common sense? Why can you not at least cover from the world your deep and bitter hatred of all who differ from you? One might suppose that your regard for the character of the Christian ministry might of itself restrain these bursts of passion, and prevent the intolerance and bigotry of your principles from appearing in your words and actions. What can you mean by accusing the members of a Christian church of the awful crime of "Apostacy," and praying that their "blood be upon their own heads?" Is this the spirit in which you conceive religious controversy should be conducted? I shudder when I reflect upon the condition of that man's mind, who could calmly write down charges so infamously false, and imprecations so awfully profane. The humblest and most unlearned of your hearers will see your error in this point. For, however zealously orthodox he may be, he will not certainly admit the justice of charging with the "guilt of apostacy" all his neighbours who may chance to differ from him in their religious opinions.

You have adopted, I perceive in your letter, the convenient method of quoting texts of scripture merely by setting down the chapter and verse without mentioning the words. Thus you can avoid all troublesome explanations, and even should the words of the passage to which you refer be directly opposite to your own assertions, still you may hope that numbers will not take time to enquire what they are. As my wish is to state your accusations against your brethren clearly, I think it right to give the words of Scripture to which you refer. It is a good old orthodox custom to which you faithfully adhere, that when any one wishes to curse his neighbours, he searches the Bible that he may find a proper phrase. Thus when your own store of abusive epithets is exhausted, you force into the pious service the threatenings of the Lord, proclaimed by the prophet Malachi, iv. 1, against the Jewish nation for their idolatry and vice.

“For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” This passage, as every one knows, refers only to the then approaching captivity of the Jews; but with a pious joy, you seize upon it for the purpose of turning the denunciation contained in it against your neighbours.

The next portion of scripture to which you refer, by the marks, Col. ii. 9, is this, “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Now, it is useless to state, that “there is a day coming,” in which we, Unitarians, shall know the truth of this text. We know it now, we avow it now, we glory in it now. We hold that all power was committed to Christ by the Father, and think it will aid your conceptions on this head, if you consult Eph. iii. 19. You will there find the Apostle praying that the members of the Church at Ephesus “*might be filled with all the fulness of God*,” pray, explain or explain away, this text on some ensuing Sunday. You intimate that Remonstrants “strip Christ of his names, titles, and attributes, and thus virtually deny him;” and “you prophecy with true orthodox charity, that “he will deny them before the angels of God.” The assertion is, as you well know, utterly false. The persons to whom you allude, never attempted to strip Christ of any name, title, or attribute, which any divinely inspired man has ever ascribed to him. All this is well known to yourself, and indeed the only term applicable to the above deliberate misrepresentation is one, which, however merited, a Christian and a gentleman will not utter. The manner in which you quote the text in 2 Pet. iii. 3, whereby your attempt to class all who differ from you with “scoffers” whom the Apostle speaks of as “walking after their own lusts,” and that in Jude 10 ver. “But these speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally, as brute beasts in those things they corrupt themselves,” is a most excellent specimen of foolish railing and low abuse, aided as much as possible by distorted passages of Scripture.

The concluding *curse in Scripture language* is well worthy of being placed last; it forms a noble climax. You hope that your “friend” (as you call the individual

to whom you write) "may be saved by a speedy repentance from the state of unbelievers mentioned," Rev. xxi. 8. According to your custom, you do not give the words, perhaps your modesty prevented you, and indeed I do not wonder that *even you* should feel ashamed of applying so horrid a denunciation to your inoffensive neighbours. The text is, "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." After such insolent and impious condemnation of a whole religious society; after presuming to class all the liberal, enlightened, and pious individuals that bear the Unitarian name with such vile characters, I feel that any reply or observation from me would be useless. I feel that moderate men of your own party will be disgusted by your violence and bigotry.

You conclude your charitable Epistle by a prayer, in which you beg that you may not be called upon as a witness against the person to whom you write. I am sure that your correspondent will join heartily in this petition, and I think you may reasonably expect success in your joint request; because, if at "the day of the dreadful accountability," any human testimony be required, we may presume to hope that the witnesses will be less prejudiced, less virulent, more clear-headed and more scrupulous with regard to truth, than your reverence seems to be.

Your Obedient Servant,

A MEMBER OF BALLYHEMLIN CONGREGATION.

Ballyhemlin, June 22d, 1835.

ANCIENT BIBLES.

A gentleman to whom Literature is considerably indebted in more than one of its branches, had made a collection of English Bibles, many of which are of unexampled rarity and value.

He condescended to dispose of them to the British Museum, for the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds; which must be considered as a great instance of generosity, as they are certainly worth much more.

The following is a description of them, in the order of their respective dates. We give their titles at full length.

COVERDALE'S BIBLE.

"THE BIBLE, that is the Holy Scripture of the Olde and New Testament, faithfully and truly translated out of Douche and Latyn into Englishe. By Myles Coverdale.

Printed in the yeare of oure Lorde, MDXXXV." Folio.

HENRY THE EIGHTH'S BIBLE.

"THE BYBLE IN ENGLISHE, that is to saye, the Content of all the Holy Scripture, both of ye. Olde and Newe Testament, truly translated after the veryte of the Hebrue and Greke Textes, by the dylygent studye of dyverse, excellent learned men, expert in the forsayde tonges. Prynted by Rychard Grafton and Edward Whitechurch. M.D.XXXIX." Folio.

The above is the first edition of what is commonly designated by the appellation of Henry the Eighth's Bible. It has the arms of Cardinal Wolsey engraved in the title page.

HENRY THE EIGHTH'S BIBLE.—SECOND EDITION.

"THE BYBLE IN ENGLYSHE, of the largest and greatest Volume, auctorised and apoynted by the Commandment of oure most redoubted Prynce and Soveraygne Lorde, Kynge Henry the VIII, supreme Head of this his Church and Realme of Englande: to be frequented and used in every Church within this his sayd Realme, accordynge to the tenoure of hys former injunctions geven in that behalfe.

Oversene and pervised at the comaundement of the Kynges hyghnes, by the ryght reverende fathers in God, Cuthbert, Byshop of Duresme, and Nicolas Bishop of Rochester. Printed by Rycharde Grafton. 1541." Folio.

The above is the second edition of Henry the Eighth's Bible, and it is worthy of observation, that the arms of Cardinal Wolsey are erased from the title page.

EDMUNDE BECK'S BIBLE.

"THE BYBLE, that is to say, all the Holy Scripture, in which are conteyned the Olde and New Testamente, truly and purely translated into Englysh, and nowelately with great industry and diligence recognised.

Imprynted at London, by Jhon Daye, dwelling at Aldersgate, and William Seres, dwelling in Peter Colledge. MDXLIX." Folio.

This is the first edition of Edmund Beek's Bible, who has subscribed his name to the dedication to Edward VI.

GENEVA BIBLE.

"THE BIBLE translated according to the Ebrew and Greeke, and conferred with the best Translations in divers Languages.

Imprinted at London, by Christopher Barker, Printer to the Queenes Majestie. 1578." Folio.

This is usually denominated the "Breeches Bible." The Bishop's Bible translates, Gen. III. 7 Aprons.

The confounding of these editions has been productive of very dangerous errors.

"Certain questions and answers, touching the Doctrine of Predestination, the use of God's Word and Sacraments" were not drawn up by our Reformers, as asserted in the Bishop's Bible, in the Preface to which Archbishop Parker maintains *Universal Redemption*; P. P. x, xi.

This Calvinistic Catechism is bound up with some editions of the Geneva Bible.

KING JAMES'S BIBLE.

"THE HOLY BIBLE, conteyning the Old Testament and the New, newly translated out of the Originall Tongues, and with the former Translations diligently compared and revised by his Majesties speciall Cōmandement.

Imprinted at London, by Robert Barker, Printer to the King's most excellent Majestie. 1611." Folio.

This is the first edition of King James's Bible.

There is onother edition of King James's Bible, in the British Museum of the same date. This also belonged to Dr. Combe. They are word for word the same throughout. One, however, is printed in a larger letter than the other, and makes a thicker volume, but it is impossible to determine which of these two was first printed.

DOWAY BIBLE.

"THE HOLIE BIBLE, faithfully translated into English, out of the authentical Latin, diligently conferred with the Hebrew, Greeke, and other editions, in divers Languages. With Arguments of the Bookes and Chapters, Annotations, Tables, and other helps for better understanding of the Text, for discoverie of Corruptions

in some late Translations, and for cleering Controversies in Religion. By the English College of Doway.

Printed at Doway, by Lawrence Kellam, M.DC.IX. M.DC.X." 8vo.

THE PENTATEUCH.

"THE PENTATEUCH, by Willyam Tindale. 1530." 8vo.

This is the first edition, and of extraordinary rarity and value.

There is said to have been printed, in 1579, by Alexander Arbuthnett, the King's Printer, at the Kirk in the field, Edinburgh, the Bible, for the Use of Scotland, by the Commissioners of the Kirk.*

In 1610, appeared Hart's Bible, which is also in folio; and which is praised by Watson, the printer, as *well printed*.† Here is the title page. "THE BIBLE, that is, the *Holy Scriptures* contained in the Olde and New Testament. Translated according to the Ebrew and Greeke, and conferred with the best translations in diverse languages: with most profitable annotations upon all hard places, and other things of great importance. "Feare yee not, stand still, and behole the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you this day. Exod. 14. 13." Then follows a sculpture, representing *the passage of the Red Sea*, which is encompassed by this text: "Great are the troubles of the righteous; but the Lord delivered him out of them all. Psalm 34. 19." Under the sculpture is the following text: "The Lord shall fight for you; therefore hold you your peace."

"At Edinburgh. Printed by Andro Hart, and are to be sold at his buith, on the North side of the Gate, a litle beneath the Crosse. Anno Dom. 1610.

Cum Privilegio Regiæ Majestatis."

OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

OUR readers are, we presume, aware of the intention of the people of Geneva to celebrate the commencement of the fourth century of the reformation, in the month of August, in the present year. The Presbyterian re-

* Herbert's Typ. Antiq. 3 v. p. 1501. For this account Bishop Tanner's mss. are quoted. It is also in folio, and is a still rarer book than Bassandyn's Bible.

† In his curious account of the Scottish Printers.

ligion was established in the Geneva state, under the auspices of John Calvin, in the month of August, 1535. Emerging from the darkness and ignorance of a semi-barbarous age, the church of Geneva, like all the Protestant churches of that era, retained for a season many vestiges of the dogmatical usurpations from which it had escaped. With a virtuous consistency, however, in which it has set an example to all Protestant churches, it has carried on the work of the Reformation to its true and legitimate issue, having emancipated itself from the bondage of human inventions, and is now among the foremost in a resolute maintenance of the right of private judgment, the sufficiency of scripture, and the rejection of all human authority in matters of faith.

With these genuine principles of that religious freedom wherewith Christ hath set his followers free, they exhibit what is the natural fruit of these principles, universal toleration, and unlimited good-will. We have much gratification in publishing their official letter, addressed to the Presbyterian bodies in Ireland, inviting them all to participate in the approaching religious festival.

A M. M. LES PASTEURS PRESBYTERIENS D'IRLANDE.

Genève, 31 Decembre, 1834.

Messieurs et très honorés Frères en Jésus Christ notre Seigneur !

L'Eglise Réformée de Genève se prépare à célébrer pour la troisième fois le souvenir des jours mémorables, où abandonnant les ténèbres pour la lumière elle proclama la liberté religieuse. Vous savez comment la bienheureuse Réformation admise solennellement chez elle en Août 1535 a été pour Genève une source abondante de bénédictions ; et vous comprendre de quelle religieuse émotion les cœurs Genèveois se remplissent à l'approche de ce nouveau Jubilé. Vous la partagerer avec nous cette émotion, nos très chers frères, vous qui aussi avez obtenu une part dans cette immense bienfait. Vos prières se joindront aux nôtres ; et vous transportant avec nous par la pensée, jusque dans ces tems de délivrance où Dieu visita son Eglise, vous implorerer sur cette Eglise entière, les effets de sa puissante protection pour le présent et pour l'avenir. Nous réclamons spécialement la communion de vos prières pour le Dimanche 23 Août, 1835, jour auquel tous le Chrétiens réformés de notre Canton se proposent d'unir leurs accers dans les hymnes de reconnoissance à leur Dieu et à leur Sauveur : il nous sera doux de sentir en ce jour solennel, que nos Frères se rejouissent de notre joie, et confondent leurs ames avec les nôtres dans un même sentiment de gratitude.

Nos vœux ne s'arrêtent pas là, Messieurs et très cheres Frères, et nous y joignons encore celui de recevoir à l'époque susmentionnée la visite des quelques-uns des membres de votre clergé. Ils seront le bienvenus auprès de nous ; et nous vous prions de leur transmettre notre invitation de la part de la Venerable Compagnie des Pasteurs de

Genève, et du comité chargé par elle de présider à la fête du Jubilé. Il nous scrait infiniment agréable que, d'après cette invitation les divers Synodes ou Presbytères du clergé réformé Presbyterien de l'Irlande consensissent à nous envoyer des députés désignés par eux pour les représenter à cette fête. Leur présence au milieu de nous nous paraîtra un moyen précieux de referrer ces liens de fraternité que nous désirons rendre de plus en plus intimes avec les clergés réformés de la Grande Bretagne.

Daigner Messieurs, et très honorés Frères recevoir l'expression de nos sentimens fraternels et de notre sincère affection en Jesus Christ notre Seigneur

PH. BASSET,
Modérateur de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève.
JS. CHOISY, *Secrétaire.*

P. S. Nous vous instamment de nous faire connoître avant la fin de Juin, les noms des vos députés, et si possible des autres personnes qui se proposeraient de se joindre a la députation, a fin que nous leur transmettions de suite les directions nécessaires sur le jour auquel ils doivent être rendus à Genève, et sur le lieu où ils seront recus à leur arrivé.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

SIR,—All readers of the Bible Christian profess to be *humble* searchers for the truth. To such, it appears to me, it must be exceedingly painful, when essays are admitted, containing arrogant denunciations against opinions which have been, and are now, held by Christians equally sincere, equally well-informed, equally intelligent with themselves.

It would be more proper to give our own views as drawn from Scripture, than to denounce others as "absurd in the highest degree, irrational, and fraught with consequences deplorably pernicious."

What opinion was ever overturned by abuse? What error was ever rectified by railing accusations? And if this be the case as to opinions, how much more so as to invective (See p. 152) against individuals, who finding what they may consider scripture-warrant for part of this confessedly difficult tenet (atonement,) reject those views of it which appear to them to be vulnerable or erroneous. Who made SIGMA judge of the sincerity of such persons?

"Who with another's eye can read,
Or worship by another's creed?"

And if we cannot judge authoritatively of opinions, or of beings such as ourselves, shall we presume to

judge *authoritatively* of the ways of the Almighty God? We only know that they are all-wise and all-good; and the conviction of this consoling truth may satisfy our minds when they are perplexed in the attempt to reconcile conflicting views, or baffled in endeavouring to search into the "secret things that belong unto the Lord." It makes me shudder to meet with such expressions as "capricious, wrathful, revengeful, tyrant, frantic fury," applied, even in argument, against any view of the actions of the Deity.

Assuredly our blessed Saviour *did* undergo all the sufferings which Calvinists suppose to have *purchased* our redemption. In my opinion the scriptures teach that he counted his sufferings as nothing, for the glory and joy that were set before him; and that so it pleased God to make him the captain of our salvation, perfect through suffering. In this view, therefore, *mercy did abound*. I think too, that those sufferings were intended to be instrumental in leading many to righteousness, even *all* who come to him in humility and sincerity; and that by his sufferings and death, as connected with his resurrection, he redeemed all his true followers from the power and dominion of sin, and became to them "the way, the truth, and the life:"—In this view, therefore, *mercy did abound*.

I cannot, any more than SIGMA, coincide in the view, that *justice* could be satisfied by the sufferings of the innocent instead of the guilty; nor in any way but by that repentance and newness of life, which shall wash out their guilt. But if, according to the Calvinistic tenet, the sufferings of Christ did purchase unconditional redemption for millions and millions of guilty souls; even in this view *mercy did abound* though justice might not. There is no justifiable occasion, therefore, for the application of such revolting epithets as tyranny, cruelty, frantic fury, &c.

I cannot recognise, in the use of such expressions, that Christian charity which is the essence of our divine master's religion. While I take great pleasure in reading the Bible Christian, and am generally indebted to its pages for such edifying advice, instruction and consolation, as to make me anxiously wish for its wide circulation, I am mortified and disappointed whenever I find invective and asperity introduced instead of that calm reasoning, mild remonstrance, and appeal to holy

writ, which the very title of your periodical would lead its readers to invariably expect. You will, I hope, pardon the freedom of this expostulation from one of your warmest friends.

A DUBLIN LADY.

OBITUARY.

Died, April 19, at his residence in Upper Baggot-street, Dublin, in the 59th year of his age, Mr. JOHN GASKIN, formerly of College Green.

Few citizens of Dublin were more generally known, or more highly valued by all classes and denominations, than this truly honest and upright man. Naturally benevolent and humane, he learned from religious principle to extend his benevolence and humanity to his fellow-beings of every sect and clime and country. His was no narrow and exclusive system, confined to a peculiar creed or church, but wide and universal ;—in humble imitation of the bounty of that God whom he worshipped, and the charity of that Redeemer in whom he placed his trust.

Sincere and ardent in his attachments, he was faithful in friendship, and exemplary in domestic life. Early placed in trying circumstances as the eldest member of a numerous family of brothers and sisters, he supplied to them the place of a parent, with all the vigilance and activity of paternal affection.

His religious sentiments were derived from the Bible alone, and he was therefore a firm believer in the unity of the Supreme Being. Though brought up in early life in Trinitarian tenets, his diligent study of the Sacred Volume enabled him to emancipate his mind from the prejudices of education, and the bondage of human corruptions, and to rest his faith on the pure unadulterated doctrines of the word of God. But while he firmly maintained what he believed to be the truth, his religion was untainted with controversial acerbity. He regarded, with respect, sincere piety, wherever it was found ; and he freely allowed to all others the liberty he claimed for himself.

To the Congregation of Strand-street, in which he was for many years an active Elder, and to all its charitable institutions, he was a zealous persevering friend ; and none of its members was more loved or esteemed by his fellow-worshippers. He sustained a long and debilitating illness with that calm fortitude which results from steadfast confidence in the goodness of God manifested through the Redeemer of the world. The efficacy of genuine Christianity had been proved as his unerring guide to an upright and charitable conduct, through the busy scenes of life ; nor was it less evinced as his un-failing support on the bed of languishing, and the secure foundation of his everlasting hope at the awful hour of dissolution.

His remains were interred in the church yard of St. Andrews' parish, on the morning of Thursday the 23d April. The funeral service was performed by the Rev. Dr. Armstrong and the Rev. Dr. Drummond, the ministers of Strand-street Congregation.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF MR. GASKIN,
 OF DUBLIN.

AND is he gone ! the well-beloved, and is his spirit fled ?
 Must that once hale and manly form, now moulder with the dead ?
 And those kind accents, which were wont in kindness still to flow,
 Have they now ceased to animate, to gladden all below ?

Methinks I see the welcome glance with which he used to greet
 Those much-loved friends, who now no more, his kindly smile
 shall meet,

I see that hand for ever prompt, soft pity to bestow,
 Which dried the tear of pining want, and bade it cease to flow.

But now his brow is clouded o'er with care and anxious grief,
 For which no human skill can bring, or solace or relief ;
 And fell disease commissioned comes from the Almighty's hand,
 To snap the silken cord of life at his supreme command.

But peace, rebellious spirit, peace ! shouldst thou not bless that day ?
 When the imprison'd soul took wing from earth and sordid clay !
 'Tis gone to that eternal home, that home supremely blest,
 Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

There hath it joined those happy souls who chaunt around the throne,
 The praise of heaven's Eternal King, the High and Holy One !
 Triumphant songs, celestial sounds, through the wide concave ring,
 " O Grave, where is thy victory ? O Death, where is thy sting ? "

Died, on Friday the 1st of May, 1835, in the 80th year of his age, HENRY ROWAN, Esq. of Arthur-street, Belfast. Mr. Rowan was educated in the belief of the doctrines commonly considered as *Orthodox* ; but latterly embraced the tenets of Unitarianism. He was an upright and conscientious man, a steady friend, and a devout and zealous Christian.

On the 21st of March last, in the island of Barbadoes, where he had gone for the benefit of his health, JAMES, eldest son of Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL, of this town, in his twentieth year.

On Friday the 15th of May last, in Dublin, ANNE, daughter of ROBERT MONTGOMERY, Esq. of Sandymount, near Belfast.

In London, on Thursday the 26th of May, MARY, eldest daughter of the late ROBERT GETTY, Esq. of Belfast.

On Wednesday the 25th of May, ELIZA, eldest daughter of the late WILLIAM THOMPSON, Esq. of Belfast.

The foregoing catalogue of individuals, most of whom were cut off in the very prime of life and promise, will carry to the bosom of the most thoughtless and unreflecting, the solemn warning,—"*Be ye also ready : for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.*" Did not motives which will easily be understood, prevent the publication of particulars respecting the conduct and character of the departed, their lives would convey a lesson as important as that inculcated by their death. There is not an individual in the list, who did not exemplify the power and influence of rational Christianity in forming a pure, a virtuous, and amiable character ; in producing a religious life, and a serene and peaceful death.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. VII.

AUGUST, 1835.

VOL. VI.

VICES OF THE TONGUE.*

To *judge*, has a different import from forming an opinion. We may form an opinion, and even an unfavourable opinion, without passing judgment. We cannot avoid forming an opinion of actions and characters as they appear to us; but, having done so, we may stop there without censuring the parties, and certainly without making known our unfavourable sentiments, and imputing blame. At least we should avoid this as far as possible. Being under a necessity to form an opinion, we must, of course, endeavour to form a true one; for truth is always preferable to falsehood and error. In fact we cannot do otherwise, and to *pretend* to think differently from what we really do, is to belie our own sentiments and deceive others. Dissimulation and hypocrisy can never be praise-worthy, whether they be on the side of praise or blame.

There are some judicial situations which render it the duty of men to judge and condemn offenders: the ministers of religion, too, are authorised to "rebuke with all authority"; masters of families and others are warranted in exercising a censorial jurisdiction over their households; but in the ordinary intercourse of social life judging implies censure, and not only censure, but a censorious disposition. We are constrained to form opinions about what we hear and see; and are at liberty to approve and disapprove. It would be not only impossible, but imprudent to act otherwise, and even unjust; for thus we should be deceived and disappointed ourselves, and behave partially to others: do no justice to piety and virtue, and often injure the cause of religion and truth. We are only bound to form a true and candid, an impartial and charitable judgment of our brethren.

We are exhorted to "judge ourselves," with a promise that then, "we shall not be judged": but even here we are not to be partial, or unjust; we are neither

*For Veracity, see page 241.

to flatter nor aggravate our failings. Some people have a habit of depreciating their own merit in conversation, and confessing their deficiencies and imperfections ; but usually confine themselves to trivial and venial errors and faults. This is generally, and often justly, ascribed to vanity, and a hope of being repaid for their voluntary humility by praise. Such persons would be greatly disappointed if their friends acquiesced in their representations, lamented their failings, and exhorted them to correct the imperfections of which they were so sensible. This is not the mode of "confessing our sins to one another," of which the apostle James speaks ; he would expect sincerity, and a wish for advice and admonition, with a view to amendment.

Others indulge in this practice, in prayers and religious discourses ; confessing sins both for themselves and their hearers of which they had never been guilty, and some which ought not even "to be named among Christians." Having thus affronted their audience, they proceed to dishonour their Creator, by deploring the natural depravity of human nature, and the ruinous state of his whole creation. These fall under the suspicion of hypocrisy. We may and should judge ourselves with the same candour and equity which we are required to manifest to others. We are only required "not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think."

There are many other cases in which we may judge, many exceptions to this as well as all other general rules ; but as we are so much in danger of erring on the severe and uncharitable side, it is more necessary to warn us against judging at all, than to point out those circumstances in which we may be allowed a latitude.

The point on which men are most frequently inclined to indulge this propensity is moral character.

Now, this is of so delicate a nature ; composed of so many secret ingredients, and depending so much on their proportions, mixture, and combinations, that it is one of the last subjects on which a hasty and permanent judgment should be formed. There are so many counteracting qualities even in the same action ; and so many actions combined in the formation of the same character, all actuated by unknown springs, that our opinion of the whole may well vibrate for a long time before it settles in a fixed point. Some vicious characters, indeed, are so decidedly marked, that we cannot avoid forming our

unfavourable opinion, and by this we must be guided in our general conduct. To treat or to trust all men alike would neither be prudent nor just. As to such men, the wisest advice is that given by our Lord as to the Pharisees, "Let them alone," both in word and deed, speak neither good nor evil of them or to them.

Temper is a part of moral character which is often made the subject of censure; but it generally happens that the censor is as much to blame as the censured, and that he betrays his own ill temper in the very act of blaming another. It is, therefore, the most prudent and the kindest practice, to abstain from speaking of it at all; especially as remarks upon it are more likely to aggravate the evil than amend it, if addressed to the irritable person, and cannot possibly do any good if expressed to others. Silence is also the best safeguard of our own temper. Next to silence a calm and low tone of voice will conduce to the preservation of our own equanimity, and secure us from provoking others. It is very difficult, or rather impossible, to give vent to anger, or any other violent passion, in a mild and soft tone. This habit, therefore, is an excellent guardian of temper on both sides. On the contrary, a loud voice not only expresses ill temper, but excites it in the breast both of the speaker and hearer. "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." There is a class of people living among us, who verify these observations by their mild manners and deliberate speech, and may be partly indebted to these for some of their inoffensive character.

A spirit of rash and inconsiderate judgment, however, is not content with condemning peevishness, fretfulness, anger and fits of passion, or other ebullitions of ill temper. A love for petty slander and defamation pollutes the whole of society, especially the middle classes. It sometimes proceeds merely from a taste for gossiping and tittle tattle, and deals only in trivial observations on things innocent in themselves, but exposing the object of animadversion to the ridicule and contempt of their neighbours. It is often, however, prompted by jealousy, envy, and deeper malice than appears on the surface; and it gradually rises through all the stages and gradations of scandal, blasting the reputation of innocent and defenceless individuals, and penetrating into the inmost recesses of domestic refinement.

Hence, it advances to those base and interested insinuations and tales, affecting the property, credit and honour of worthy and respectable members of the community, which so frequently call for the rigorous investigation and exemplary punishment of the law. At length this pernicious pest, though weak and timid at first, gains strength and courage as she proceeds and increases in size; first crawling on the ground, but at length hides her head among the clouds, and spreading discontent, sedition and tumult, through the land.

Another subject of rash and intemperate, often of malicious judgment, is religious opinions. This, indeed, is the favourite topic of our own times. This species of slander also begins with dark surmises, and treacherous insinuations, affected pity, and hypocritical concern; confidential whispers in closets, and ambiguous hints in select parties. The rumour then takes air; no body vouches for the slander; but every one has heard it; and what every body says must be true. It begins to be doubted, whether a person holding certain religious sentiments is suitable company for her pious neighbours; (I say *her*, for so far the scandal is the work of women) whether she be a proper person to be employed as a servant, encouraged as a dealer; trusted with the education of children, or admitted into private society. The grounds for these suspicions may be dubious, perhaps imaginary; but there are swarms of tale-bearers ready to convey the intelligence. A simple fact forms but an uninteresting story. Such persons, therefore, delight in amplifying, embellishing, and aggravating.

Besides, the imputed principle may not strike every one as sufficiently criminal or dangerous. Its consequences, therefore, and its effects upon character and conduct must be laid open; and these will afford a copious theme for calumnious eloquence. It is, therefore, wisely ordained, that "thou shalt not go about as a tale-bearer among thy people." This occupation, however, is too fascinating, especially to those who have nothing to do at home, to be relinquished out of respect to a text of scripture. These swarms of emissaries, too, are generally prompted, encouraged and flattered by persons of a superior, often of a sacred order; who make them their tools and instruments in effecting more atrocious purposes.

After all, the principles which have been the subject of all these doubts and suspicions, hints and inuendoes,

and given rise to so much calumny and petty persecution, may be perfectly harmless, innocent and scriptural ; but no matter, they are unpopular, and will answer all the purposes already pointed out, as well as if they were ever so immoral and irreligious.

I have enumerated several of the subjects, upon which men exercise a malicious and censorious judgment. It is not my object or intention to enlarge upon any of them as they deserve. Each would demand a distinct article for itself. Neither do I mean to deny, that the censorial jurisdiction of the public is often productive of much good ; whether by conversation or writing it is often a powerful corrector of manners, both as to private society and national government ; but as calumny is a very base and a very seducing vice, and apt to take possession of our minds under deceitful forms and false pretences, and as there is no danger of private or public faults passing unnoticed, I would advise my readers to leave this invidious task to others.

No one is more exposed to slander than the slanderer, and no one has less cause to complain. When the back-biter turns his back, he is sure to be back-bitten. As every one suspects himself of having been the object of his calumny at some time or other, he will calumniate the slanderer in his own defence ; for thus will he most effectually destroy his credit, blunt the edge of his malice, and pluck the sting from his scandal.

To none are the precepts of judging ourselves, and examining our own hearts and lives more necessary than to persons of a censorious character. If they looked into their own hearts, they would not only become sensible of failings and errors, that should make them indulgent to others ; but also of numerous trials and vexatious circumstances in their lives, that would call for indulgence if made known, and to which they may reasonably suppose their neighbours to be as liable as themselves, and consequently entitled to the same indulgence. They would find that they required that lenity which they *refused* to their brethren ; and could by no means stand the scrutiny, that they exercised ; and would learn at length to do to others, as they would have others do to them.

To guard against these daily temptations requires perpetual vigilance ; yet all is not sufficient. The true way both to be freed from the allurements and sin,

and also relieved from continual watchfulness, is to form such habits and dispositions as may preserve us from this necessity. It is possible to acquire such a temper, as may render all the cautions against these petty sins unnecessary.

This state of mind should be cultivated as a guardian against other vices as well as censoriousness and slander. If, when we feel any sinful inclination, we have to recollect the text by which it is forbidden, we shall commit the sin before we think of the prohibition; and when it is recalled to mind, it will only serve as a cause of fruitless regret. But if our minds be so disciplined, as to suppress the inclination, and be habitually inclined to virtuous thoughts and actions, the case will be reversed. A temptation to sin will obstruct the natural and pleasing current of our propensities, and do violence to our habitual feelings. We shall, therefore, shun the allurements without difficulty or pain; and our recollections, instead of vain regret and humiliating repentance, will be self-satisfaction and gratulation. We shall be insensibly carried past the shoals and quicksands that threaten our safety; avoid the rocks which make shipwreck of faith and conscience, and pursue our course along a smooth and gentle current, till we arrive at our destined haven.

One who has acquired this frame of mind, “envieth not, and vaunteth not himself; rejoiceth not at the iniquity of others, but believeth all things; hopeth all things,” to the advantage of a neighbour, and hideth the sins of his brethren. He rejoiceth to hear of good actions and noble characters, and to be told of the prosperity of individuals and of the public. He congratulates the prosperous, and sympathises with the unhappy. He delights to hear of pious christians, how much soever they may differ from him in opinion. Every thing gives him pleasure, except vice and misfortune, guilt and pain;—of course most things give him satisfaction, because there is more good than evil in the world, and he is ever disposed to dwell on the good, and think charitably of the evil. He can overlook slight failings, and is not disconcerted with those little improprieties in manners and conversation, by which others are fretted and irritated. He is gratified by kindness, without resenting injury. He takes pleasure in the exercise of benevolence and charity, natural affection and friendship.

He enjoys a delightful calm and composure of mind; can bear his own misfortunes and disappointment with tranquillity, and avoids those painful anticipations and vain regrets, which add so much to our real evils; for he trusts in providence that all will be well at last, and that notwithstanding his many defects and omissions, he has done nothing beyond the limits of the divine mercy. This is a character hard to be attained in active life, amid business and broils, competitions and contests; and the constant presence of sordid people engaged in selfish projects. It requires retirement to be carried to perfection, and retirement should be sought on its account, as far as is consistent with duty. NEMO.

IRELAND.—THE REV. GEORGE HARRIS.

OUR readers are all aware that Mr. Harris visited this country in Spring. Most of them, we presume, had the pleasure of hearing him preach, and must have been struck with the transcendent excellence of great talents and high attainments when employed in the sacred work of enlarging the human mind, and purifying the human heart. As the eloquent advocate of God's truth and man's rights, his name has long been "in all the churches;" and we are persuaded, that the opportunity which the friends of the gospel recently enjoyed of a personal knowledge of Mr. Harris, will in no way detract from the esteem in which he is held.

In the last number of the *Christian Pioneer*, of which he is the editor, he has given a very copious and interesting report of his visit, detailing the various places which he visited—the public meetings which he attended, and the kind and liberal reception with which he was uniformly met. We regret that our limits will not permit us to give this valuable report at length—it occupies a full number of the *Pioneer*; but we shall present our readers with his introductory and concluding remarks, in which they will discover that energy of thought, warmth of benevolence, and power of description, for which Mr. Harris is so greatly distinguished.

"What different ideas does the word IRELAND suggest to different individuals! With one, it is associated only with riot and outrage, the conflict of rival factions, conspiracy, abduction, murder. To another, it calls up "No surrender!" Tithe exaction, Church and King,

Protestant ascendancy, "the glorious and immortal memory," Orangeism, and no Popery. A third, regards it as a land overrun by Priests and Papists, haters of education, suppressors of the Bible, enemies of all righteousness, and among whom it is impossible to live. A fourth revels in visions of agitation and repeal, a parliament in College Green, and a free and equal commonwealth. No subject has been more talked about than Ireland—none has been so little understood. That ignorance is at once Britain's injury and shame. What but the most criminal indifference to truth, or the most besotted blindness, could have perpetrated, or allowed the perpetration, in the British House of Commons, of the statement of the rapid increase, and prodigious prosperity of the manufactories of Kilkenny, at the very moment that not a wheel was going, and every loom was empty! What excuse can be offered for a proprietor of the soil, who could imagine, that in a transient return from his absenteeism, he could propitiate his peasantry by presents of beads, and broaches, and mirrors! They asked for bread and he gave them glass. It might have been appropriate at Otaheite; but for Ireland, he might as well have been employed, like the sages of Laputa, in extracting sun-beams from cucumbers.

The character of the people of Ireland has been foully maligned. According to their libellers, the whole heart is sick, the whole head is sore. They might personify the doctrine of Original sin. They are totally corrupt, incapable of thinking a good thought, or of doing a good action. Supposing this were truth, and not defamation, the enquiry should be made, what induced this perversity? God or man? Nature or misgovernment? Free and frequent intercourse would show their vices to be the evil fruit of persecution, oppression, and misrule—their virtues, the exuberant and spontaneous production of generous and kindly hearts. They may be led—they never can—they never ought to be driven. By conciliation, every thing that the patriot, the Christian could wish, might be effected; by force, nothing. Convince them that you have at heart their good—that no sinister aims are yours—that truth, justice, and benevolence are your guides; and a more grateful and affectionate people the sun shines not on.

And on few countries more beautiful than Ireland does the sun shine. It has every variety of scene to de-

light the eye and captivate the heart. Mountain and lake, forest, valley, and lay, and glade, and river, are spread in glorious profusion, and mingle their loveliness and grandeur in every direction. The green that covers the fields is most beautiful. Well may it have given the country the title of Emerald Isle. The curse of heaven is not visible on the land. All would be happy did man but coincide with the purposes of God.

No one who loves to contemplate the magnificence and beauties of creation, and to trace in them the proofs of benignity and wisdom, can fail, on visiting Ireland, to deem it a country singularly blessed in situation and climate, in soil and scenery. No one who has a heart of flesh, can visit Ireland, and not, at once, be struck by the mournful contrast which is on almost every side presented between the loveliness of the country and the destitution of large portions of the people—between the abundance of food daily, hourly exported, and half starving thousands—the extremes of splendour and beggary united in one motley and incongruous group. He cannot avoid asking himself—should these things be? He cannot, as a Christian, but resolve, that if he discover the causes of such social wrong, his utmost efforts shall be given unflinchingly to apply the remedy.”

We have given the introduction of Mr. Harris’s report. The conclusion is as follows:—“I always thought that a strange chapter in Miss Martineau’s “Ireland,” which attempts to show that absenteeism is productive of no injury to the country; and labours to prove the justice, patriotism, and beneficence of the landlord who spends in Paris and at Rome the thousands wrung from a rack-rented tenantry. No one can cast his eye over different portions of Ireland, and not be convinced of its erroneousness. There is no need of being told where the proprietor is resident. The fields proclaim it. You may see it in the appearance of the dwellings—in the countenances, the dress of the peasantry. No need of having pointed out to you the property of the absentee. Its curse is visible enough. Talk not of the demoralization of the people, you who have been the chief originators, by the neglect of the duties you owed the people. Set your own house in order; “put away the evil of your doings; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgments, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.”

“But let there be no clerical magistrates, for that itself is a sore evil under the sun, and must be removed. It is the source of ceaseless heart-burnings and oppressions. Too often it is the party deciding his own case. Onerous enough are the duties of a clergyman; if faithfully performed, they will occupy the time of the most industrious. To add to them the administration of the contradictory enactments of legislative wisdom, or of ancient ignorance and intolerance, is to poison the fountainhead of justice,—to exasperate to disobedience and crime. And if a clergyman, from having no parishioners to visit, or no church to preach in, has no duties to perform, better at once abolish the sinecure, than make that sinecure the payment for clerical justice,—that justice the precursor of military outrage. There will be no peace for Ireland till there is a civil magistracy appointed and paid by government,—the tools neither of religious bigots, nor of civil faction.”

“There must be a well-considered, judicious, and efficient Poor-Law established in Ireland. It is monstrous to suppose, that the helpless orphan, and infirm and destitute old age, are to continue uncared and unprovided for. One of the first purposes of society is unaccomplished, while such social wrongs exist. The claims of humanity are paramount to all other rights. There is enough and to spare at the great feast of nature, were the bounties of providence only properly apportioned. That in England Poor Laws have been abused is no reason that in Ireland the poor should be starved. The Houses of Industry, the Mendicity associations that now exist, are instruments of good as far as they go; but they are a heavy tax on the benevolence of those least able to bear it, whilst those who should mainly bear the burden, though they exact the uttermost farthing from the people in support of their own luxury, contribute not a single farthing to the support of the necessitous.”

“I am happy to bear my testimony to the spread of Christian truth and righteousness, wherever exertion is used to disseminate its knowledge. Many of the congregations are flourishing, new societies are rising, and individuals in many places are openly avowing their conviction, that the holy and beneficent faith in which we glory, is rational and scriptural. That much more might be done for the advancement of scriptural inquiry, liberty, and truth, is most true. The means are there. The

labourers are ready. The fields certainly are white unto the harvest. There only needs a union of the power which already exists, and a guiding mind that shall direct it wisely, and energetically and perseveringly; and the most sanguine anticipations would fall short of the reality of good that could readily be effected. And when great good is to be effected, there should be no fear but that of not accomplishing it. No matter what this individual may dread, or that party may object. If a thing be right, do it; if a principle be good, adhere to it. * * * * *

"I left Belfast for Glasgow, May 21, and reached home on the following morning, after an absence of nine weeks, having travelled nearly fourteen hundred miles, and having abundant causes of thankfulness and gratulation. Nor can I close this account of my visit, without again expressing my gratitude to the ministers and friends I have already named, for their kindness and attention; and recording my warmest acknowledgments to all in every place, who so generously contributed to the object of my mission, and rendered my sojourn in Ireland, by their private hospitality and public honours, at once instructive and delightful. In every relation in life, may they be prosperous and happy."

OUR SAVIOUR AND THE FIG-TREE.

"AND on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry; and seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever." Mark, xi. 12, 13, 14.

The above incident in the Saviour's ministry, is one of those which, to the general reader, presents considerable difficulty. It is connected with no important doctrine of the gospel, and therefore the proper understanding of the passage is commonly deemed a matter of no moment; but sceptics gladly seize upon such portions of scripture, and cling to them as favouring their own deadening views. We should not, therefore, pass them unheeded, but carefully study them; and it will be found, that when investigated, they not only exhibit a consistency of narrative and propriety of action, but

also materially conduce to establish the genuineness and authenticity of holy scripture—a consideration of this passage will justify our remark.

We read that when our Saviour had come from Bethany he was hungry, and seeing a fig-tree growing at a distance, he went to it, hoping to find some fruit on it, by which he might be refreshed. From the passage as quoted above, we would suppose that there was nothing but leaves on the tree *because* the time of figs was not yet; we might hence allege that it was most unreasonable in Jesus to expect fruit before the time, and destroy the tree because he was disappointed.

The case, however, is thus satisfactorily and beautifully explained. The fig-tree is one of those few trees which bear the flower before the leaf, and the fruit is in some degree formed before the leaves appear. Our Saviour, therefore, seeing the leaves "*afar off*," supposed that the fruit must be approaching to maturity; and it is frequently eaten in those warm countries before it is fully ripe.

By "the time of figs," we are not to understand the period when they begin to ripen, but the period when they are taken off the trees; or, as we might call it, the *fig-harvest*. That this is the true meaning of the phrase, "the time of figs," will be more evident from Matt. 21, 34, "and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it."

Again, the words "for the time of figs was not yet," are to be connected; not with the words immediately preceding, which are rather a parenthesis, but with the former part of the verse as if it ran thus;—*if haply he might find any thing thereon—for the time of figs was not yet; and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves*. Such a construction is not unfrequent,—a striking example of it occurs in Mark xvi. 3, 4, where the words *for it was very great* are connected, not with the former part of the verse in which they are found, but with the latter part of the previous verse, *who shall roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?*

After this explanation, then, the meaning of the passage will be thus brought out:—Jesus saw a fig-tree afar off, *having leaves*; he therefore concluded that the fruit must be considerably grown—the *time of figs was not yet*; the figs could not, therefore, have been gather-

ed if it had been the fig harvest—the leaves might have been there and the fruit away ; and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves. He must consequently have concluded that the tree bore no fruit ;—it was thus a type of the Jewish people, and our Saviour spoke through it a sentence of condemnation against them.

We see, then, how passages trivial in themselves and fraught with inconsistency, when duly examined, are found to bear the stamp of truth. As in nature, the tiniest flower, or the meanest insect, joins with the magnificent objects of creation in speaking the wisdom of Jehovah ; so in revelation, a casual incident or a passing scene unites with the grand doctrines of our religion in bearing testimony to the truth of that gospel which binds man to his God—time to eternity.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 255.)

V. 44. Whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken, &c.

The effects are less dreadful when a man falls on a large stone, than when the stone falls on him. Dr. Whitby thinks, that here is an allusion to the two different ways of stoning among Jews ; the former by throwing a person down upon a great stone ; and the other, by letting a stone fall upon him.

Some commentators think, that this verse should immediately follow verse 42.

CHAPTER XXII.

V. 1. Tuesday before the Crucifixion.

V. 2. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, &c.

By “king” is often meant, any rich and powerful man, or governor of a province.

The object of this parable is to represent the invitation given to the Jews to embrace the gospel, their rejection of that offer, the severe punishment inflicted on them, and the admission of the heathens in their room. It was the custom in Eastern nations, for great men to give a feast at the marriage of their sons.

Dr. Pococke in his account of a great entertainment, made by the governor of an Egyptian village for the Cashif, with whom he travelled, says, the custom was, for every one when he had done eating to get up, wash his hands, and take a draught of water ; and so in a continual succession, till the poor came in and ate up all—for the Arabs never set by any thing that is brought to table ; so that when they kill a sheep, they dress it all, call in their

neighbours and the poor, and finish every thing. In giving an account of the diet of the Eastern people, he informs us, that an Arab will often dine in the street before his door, and call to all that pass, even beggars, who come and sit down, and when they have done, retire with their usual form of returning thanks.

V. 7. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and he sent forth his armies, &c.

The destruction of the Jews, and of Jerusalem, by the Roman armies, a few years after, is here foretold.

V. 11. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment, &c.

In the East every one that came to a marriage feast was expected to appear in a handsome dress, called a wedding garment, which was frequently a white robe. Rev. iii. 18. xix. 8. Where the guest was a stranger, or was not able to provide such a robe, it was usual for the master of the feast to provide him with one; and if he who gave the entertainment was of high rank and great opulence, he sometimes provided marriage robes for the whole assembly. It was very indecorous to intrude into the festivity without this garment. This man was put out of the hall of festivity, and consigned to the dark parts of the mansion, or to the street. Matt. viii. 12. xxv. 30.

V. 14. For many are called, but few are chosen.

For great numbers are invited to the privileges of the Gospel, but those who comply with the invitation are comparatively few. *Harwood.*

V. 16. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying: Master, [teacher,] &c.

"Herodians," friends or officers of Herod. Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee; and therefore well-disposed to the interest of the Roman Emperor. The name may no more denote a religious sect than Cæsarean or Pompeian.

V. 17. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?

They thought that in answering this question, he must render himself odious to the Jewish people, or to the Roman government.

Our Lord, by asking, "whose is this image and superscription?" may have meant to distinguish between the half-shekel, a Jewish coin, which was dedicated to God, as part of the temple service; and the penny, or Roman denarius, which was paid in the form of tribute to their conquerors.

The right of coinage is a mark of sovereignty; and the Rabbins held, that to admit the impression and inscription of any prince on their current coin, was an acknowledgment of their subjection to him. We are told that the denarius paid by the Jews as tribute money, had this superscription over the head of Caesar—*Caesar Augustus, Judea being subdued.*

V. 32. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, have therefore been released from death, and are still in existence.

V. 39. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Not equally with, but in like manner as thyself. Our self-love prompts us to seek our own happiness, as far as is consistent with the duties we owe to God and man. Our social love should, in the same manner, prompt us to seek the happiness of our neighbour, as far as is consistent with the duty we owe to God and ourselves.

V. 44. The *Lord* [*Jehovah*] said unto my Lord, &c.

In the Old Testament, when Lord is printed in capital letters, it is in the Hebrew *Jehovah*, which should perhaps have been retained in the English. This word has the same meaning in the New Testament when printed in the same characters; as here, "*Jehovah said to my Lord.*"

A footstool was a necessary appendage to those chairs, which were used in the East on solemn occasions, in opposition to the usual mode of sitting on floors, carpets, or mattresses. 2 Chron. ix.8.

CHAPTER XXIII.

V. 2. The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

That is, as official expounders of the law, in the same manner as our judges administer the law.

V. 5. They make broad their phylacteries, &c.

Slips of parchment, with portions of the Mosaic law written on them, worn by the Jews on their foreheads and arms—see Deut. vi. 8. xi. 18—Prov. vii. 3. They were thus called because they reminded the Jews to *keep* the law, or because they were supposed to *keep* them from harm. The Pharisees ostentatiously wore them of a great breadth.

V. 6. And love the uppermost rooms, [*places*] &c.

V. 7. Rabbi.

My Master, or my Teacher. In John, i. 38, it is interpreted master.

V. 8. Christ is omitted by Griesbach.

V. 8. And all ye are brethren.

Wetstein, and Bishop Pearce, give authorities for placing these words at the close of v. 9, where they may be introduced very pertinently and beautifully.

V. 9. And call no man your father upon the earth.

This does not prohibit us from paying an earthly teacher due regard and attention, but forbids that deference, which the Scribes and the Pharisees were by our Saviour reprov'd for unjustly claiming; which was, that men should follow them ignorantly and implicitly in the traditions they taught, and regard their human authority in matters of faith, or in doctrines of religion.

V. 13. For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men.

Ye bar access into my church.

V. 14. For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore, ye shall receive the greater damnation.

This verse is interpolated from Mark, xii. 40—Luke, xx. 47. *Newcome.*

Griesbach places this verse before v. 13.

The meaning of *damnation* in old English was *condemnation*, and it should have been so translated here and elsewhere, particularly 1 Cor. xi. 29.

V. 16. Whosoever shall swear by the temple, &c.

Our holy redeemer teaches here and elsewhere, that only one form of oath is necessary, and that should supersede all others; as, being nugatory or profane.

"He is a debtor;" he is bound to perform his oath.

Our Saviour here condemns all evasive and trifling oaths.

V. 23. For ye pay tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, &c.

The Jews were commanded (Deut. xiv. 28, 29.) that every third year they should bring forth all the tithe of the increase of their lands, for the Levites and the poor. Some thought this only respected the fruits of the fields and vineyards, and not garden herbs which could be of no use to the support of the poor; but others would needs show their religious zeal by taking it in the severest sense.

"Faith" does not here signify belief in the essential doctrines of religion, but rather fidelity in performing its duties.

V. 23. Judgment, mercy, and faith, [justice, humanity, and fidelity.—*Campbell.*]

V. 24. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel!

Rather *strain* a gnat out of any liquor. Flies were considered as unclean. The Pharisees would not drink any liquor till it had been strained through a linen cloth.

Dr. Pococke has preserved an Arabic proverb, which says, "he swallows an elephant and is choked by a flea."

V. 27. Whited sepulchres, &c.

The graves of the principal persons were distinguished by square rooms, with cupolas built over them, which being constantly kept clean, whitewashed, and beautified, they continue till this day an excellent comment on this expression of our Saviour. They were thus whitened, that people might discern they were polluted places, and consequently avoid coming near them. The same precaution was taken as to common graves. See Num. xix. 16.

V. 29. Because ye build the tombs of the prophets, &c.

Notwithstanding their pretensions of showing great respect to the memory of the prophets, by building and adorning their sepulchres; yet this was only shown to them because they were dead, and could no longer reprove them; whereas the living prophets were persecuted by them, just as the ancient ones had been by their forefathers.

"Ye call (v. 31, 32.) the murderers of the prophets your fathers, thus granting that ye are their sons. Imitate, therefore, their wickedness, or rather exceed it, in destroying me and the prophets whom I will send. This is the language of strong indignation."—*Newcome*.

As the *children of the prophets* signifies the followers or imitators of the prophets, so *the children of them which killed the prophets* may mean those who resembled them in character.

V. 34. Wherefore, &c.

In the Greek it is *on this account*, or *for this*.

Dr. Doddridge connects this word with the preceding verse, thus, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell *for this* conduct, or *on this account*? Behold I send," &c.

"Persecute," banish from city to city.—*Campbell*.

V. 35. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, &c.

Jesus does not here mean that any of the Jews should be punished on account of the murder of Abel, for they did not descend from either him or his murderer; neither that any of that generation should be punished for what another generation did; but he designed to express their punishment in the most forcible manner; thus John, Rev. xviii. 24. This liberty of speech was familiar to the Jews: all languages have more or less in them of this kind.—*Abp. Secker*.

"Zacharias, son of Barachias:" this was the same Barachias mentioned, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20.

The phrase, "From the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias," is supposed to have been a proverbial expression.

CHAPTER XXIV.

V. 3. End of the world.

End of the Jewish dispensation.—*Newcome*.

By "the end of the world" is to be understood, not the final consummation of all things, but the end of that age, the end of the Jewish state and polity.—*Bp. Porteus*. Dr. Macnight also understands by this expression, the end of the Mosaic dispensation." See Brief Notes on chap. vi. 14.

V. 6. But the end is not yet.

The end of the Jewish civil and ecclesiastical polity. See v. 14. —*Newcome*.

V. 13. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved [preserved.]

Shall save his life. See v. 22.—*Newcome*.

He that shall be faithful to the end of these calamities will escape.

V. 14. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations.

It appears from history to have been preached in every part of the then known world, within about 30 years after the death of Christ, which was before the destruction of Jerusalem. See Doddridge's note on this verse.

V. 15. The abomination of desolation, &c.

"The abomination of desolation," or the desolating abomination was the Roman army, the standards of which were adorned with idolatrous images, and were therefore called abominations, a word peculiarly applied to idols in the Old Testament. When these were planted in the holy city, and near the temple, the Jews were to abandon their homes and flee into the mountains.

"Whoso readeth, let him understand." These are probably the words of Matthew and not of our Lord; but Newcome supposes that they may be a marginal note inserted here, and in Mark xiii. 14.

V. 17. Let him which is on the housetop not come down.

The houses in Judea were all flat-roofed, and communicated with each other; a person, therefore, might proceed to the city walls and escape; or he might descend from the roof, on which they spent much of their time, by the outer staircase, with which the houses were accommodated, and which probably communicated with different floors, without going through the apartments to remove his effects.

This and the following are not to be considered as directions for their conduct, but instances of what would take place in a hasty flight, to which these circumstances would be an impediment, particularly the sabbath, on which the Jews did not think it lawful to travel further than about a mile.

V. 22. There should no flesh be saved, but for the elect's sake, &c.

"No flesh," no inhabitant of this country. The destruction shall go on so fast that unless God shorten those days, not one Jew should remain alive.

"The elect's sake." Our Lord means the converts to Christianity, in opposition to the Jews and Gentiles.—*Hewlett.*

In the Old Testament, the Israelites are called God's elect or chosen people, and Christians are often called the elect in the New.

V. 24. Great signs and wonders.

Not real, but false ones.

V. 28. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

As the eagle scents his prey, so will the instruments of my vengeance overtake the devoted Jews. We have here a proverbial expression containing a beautiful allusion to the eagles of the Roman standards. See Job. xxxix. 30.

V. 29. Immediately after, &c.

"The powers of heaven; the hosts of heaven, or the heavenly bodies; Isaiah xxxiv. 4. This is a strong language of Eastern prophecy, to denote that the Jewish rulers, their temple worship and state, should be destroyed."—*Newcome*.

So also Doddridge.

V. 30. And then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven, &c.

"In heaven." I refer these words to the son of man who shall then have ascended into heaven. And by the sign of the son of man I understand manifest tokens of his executing vengeance on the Jews.—*Newcome*.

"All the tribes of the earth;" of the land of Judea. The Greek word signifies both land and earth.

V. 31. He shall send his angels, &c.

And he will employ such means to preserve his true disciples from being involved in the general destruction, as will resemble sending his angels, &c. to gather together, &c.—*Newcome*.

These words relate principally to the destruction of Jerusalem; after which Christ would send forth his angels, that is, his messengers or ministers (for so the word angels strictly signifies,) to preach his Gospel to all the world, and to collect disciples and converts to the faith.—*Bp. Porteus*. See also Lenfant, and Dr. Macknight.

Most translations obscure this text by rendering the original word by *angels*. It is often applied to men and rendered *messengers*. See Mark i. 2; Luke vii. 24. 47; ix. 52; 2 Cor. viii. 23; Phil. ii. 25; and Jam. ii. 25. In some of which places it signifies, as here, *preachers of the Gospel*.—*Doddridge*.

V. 34. This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Accordingly, all these events did actually take place within forty years after our Saviour delivered this prophecy; and this is a proof, that every thing our Lord had been saying related principally, not to the day of judgment, but to the destruction of Jerusalem.—*Bishop Porteus*.

V. 36. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, &c.

That day may signify either the day of the destruction of Jerusalem, or the day in which the heavens, and the earth shall pass away.

The last day is sometimes called *that day* with a peculiar emphasis; a phrase answering to the great or remarkable day. Compare 2 Tim. 1, 12, 18; iv. 8. The word *that* is frequently used in this sense, on other subjects: thus, "This is that king Ahaz," signifies that notorious and infamous king Ahaz.

PREACHING AND PREACHERS.

NO. X.

EFFECTS OF EVANGELICAL PREACHING.

(Continued from Vol. V, p. 475.)

It is so long since we contributed any of our desultory papers, that we presume the readers of the present must have totally forgotten all its predecessors. It is not, however, the less certain that when we were induced, by the unexpected death of Mr. Irving, to throw out some observations upon that distinguished preacher, we left the subject of *Evangelical Preaching* incomplete. After sketching its peculiarities, we adverted to the reasons of its popularity, and then proceeded to consider the kind of religious character which it has a tendency to form. In treating of this topic we stated frankly, but not, we hope, offensively, the grounds upon which we were compelled to come to the conclusion, that notwithstanding the general purity of Evangelical practice at the present day,—a purity which we at once admitted, and for which we endeavoured to account,—there was, yet, in Evangelical preaching an ultimate, and if nothing checked, an inevitable tendency to corrupt—a tendency which the principles of human nature, and the history of religious opinion, furnished as it appeared to us, abundant evidence to prove. We believe we need not recapitulate more minutely our views upon this subject.

But what, then, are we to say of the great acceptance with which Evangelical Preaching unquestionably meets? Can we deny that it is, and must be, by the power of God that such multitudes assemble to hear the message delivered by his chosen servants? Is there anything save gospel truth alone that could work so mightily and prevail? Here, indeed, it is said, we may discern how it is that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, and how the foolishness of the foolish confounds the wisdom of the wise!

All this, no doubt, is a little staggering. It sounds, indeed, somewhat strangely from the evangelical. The total depravity of human nature is his favourite topic, and surely it is lies, not verities, which ought, naturally, to secure the sympathies of the depraved. But, setting this apart, the allegation is one to which Evangelical writers will themselves afford an answer. It is, as every

body knows, a very convenient way of shutting the mouth of the moral preacher, prosing away to empty pews. But it is just as often used by religionists, still more ultra than the Evangelicals themselves, to silence their own cavilling, and the thing assumes another aspect altogether,—then a preacher's popularity only proves that his preaching is perdition,—then, for the first time, their eyes are opened to the difference between the many on the broad way, and the few on the narrow path. The Antinomians, it is well known, appeal triumphantly to the success which attends their ministrations, and hurl that fact into the faces of their Evangelical assailants. Do these, on the other hand, deny the truth of what is stated? By no means; the conclusion which is attempted to be drawn from it is the only thing which they impugn. We are tempted to give one instance of the way in which Evangelicals account for Antinomian popularity. Dr. Hawker of Plymouth, originally Evangelical, had in the natural progress of opinion, become completely Antinomian, and urged, in one of his numerous publications, his augmented congregation, in proof of the propriety of his change. What he had himself experienced, he maintained to have been universally the case. Upon this head, the following are the remarks of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVER, an able and influential organ of the Evangelicals.

“Their hearers misunderstand that which we defy any one rightly to understand, and thus crowd to them in masses, to hear, what?—an unscriptural assurance of ‘comfort,’ under whatever pressure of guilt; a gentle release from duty, under whatever sense of moral obligation. Were a Dr. Hawker to preach in every pulpit in the kingdom, we verily believe that every church and chapel would be thronged; but we should, after all, witness the exhibition of a very different way from that really narrow path that leadeth unto life.”*

It is thus that the Evangelical encounters the boastings of the Antinomian popularity. It is possible, no doubt, that the position which he lays down may not be altogether a correct one. For reasons which we formerly explained at length, we think that such solutions as the present can never fully satisfy a candid mind. They ascribe to the operation of a single cause an effect which

**Chris. Observer* for 1825.

is produced by many. But there is not one word of the *Observer's* statement which is not applicable to his own creed; nor could he have any reasonable ground for complaint, were he tried himself by the law which he lays down for others, and if with the measure which he metes withal, it were measured to him again.

The Evangelical appeals, however, to another test. He points to the walk and conversation of his brethren, and bids the accusers of Evangelism be abashed. Men do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles. Good fruit is not the produce of a tree corrupted. Are the men, he asks, who babble everlastingly about morals, as scrupulously moral as those whose tenets they audaciously denounce? We recur, once more, to the case of the Antinomians. Christians of this stamp, also, when attacked by Evangelical adversaries, are not slow to meet the charge of licentious tendency, by a reference to facts. They deny that genuine gospel liberty can ever be abused; they bare their bosoms to the world; they challenge the most minute inspection; they proclaim in the face of heaven and earth, that their walk and conversation need not shrink from a comparison with those exhibited by legalists of any description, Evangelical or otherwise, and assert that Antinomian practice shows how vain are all the alarms of those miserable tremblers who fear to trust their purity to the keeping of the Holy Ghost. Upon the subject of defence, let us hear an Evangelical again. From the Rev. Edward Cooper's sermons we have already quoted for a different purpose. The following remarks upon Antinomian morality we transcribe from another work of that eminent divine.

“ We might, perhaps, have expected that these ministers of Satan, should exemplify in their own conduct and character the full practical tendency of the doctrines which they disseminate. But, however well founded such expectations might, at first sight, appear, a little further reflection will convince us of their unsoundness and fallacy. Agents of this description would not have suited the objects and purposes of the deceiver. A more covert and insidious course must be pursued. Those who are employed in propagating Antinomianism must display, in their own lives, nothing of its offensive and licentious tendency; on the contrary, they must, externally at least, be correct specimens and exemplars of

the Christian church: the poison which they are employed to diffuse must be gilded over by the plausible exterior of their own religious profession. By their apparently ardent zeal, upright conduct, and general purity of morals, the suspicions of mankind must be laid asleep; and the pernicious consequences to which their tenets ultimately lead must, for a season, be kept out of sight. It is only by selecting instruments of this description that Satan could reasonably entertain any expectations of success; and in selecting such instruments he discloses, at once, his consummate policy and malignant hopes."*

It is thus that the Evangelical encounters the boastings of Antinomian morality. Were any other religionist,—a Unitarian, for instance, to write in the same way of the Evangelical himself, how would the fiery indignation of the slandered body flash forth to blast the slanderer! "Do unto others," says the scripture, "whatsoever ye would that they should do unto you." Alas, when will Polemics learn that golden rule?

A better explanation of all such gratifying inconsistencies between character and creed may easily be given. Our own views upon the subject, we have already, at some length, submitted to the reader.† The consciousness of having watchful eyes upon us, necessarily induces circumspection. Injurious dogmas are often held in connexion with noble sentiments which completely paralyze their power. Both Evangelicism and Antinomianism, as we have elsewhere had occasion to point out, excite most powerfully, in the souls of their first converts, the two strongest emotions of which they are susceptible, fear and love; and in such cases, the very agitation of the waters is itself a purification. Considerations such as these may serve, we think, to account for all the phenomena to which we are adverting, without having recourse, with Mr. Cooper, to the craft and cunning of the old deceiver. But are these preservatives likely to be permanent? Here, as it appears to us, is the real ground for apprehension. Let Evangelicism or Antinomianism prevail generally, and the dread of hostile scrutiny departs; noble sentiments will not long retain their character in the contamination of bad company;

* Letters to an Humble Inquirer after Divine Truth, page 150.

† Preaching and Preachers, No. V.

the healthful agitation which is at first experienced, must in time subside, and all become stagnant and corrupt. To bring down, in any way, the standard of morality, is always dangerous. Society is, upon the whole, in a safer state with an elevated standard, and a practice somewhat lax, than when, with a practice much more strict, the standard has been lowered. In both cases, it may ultimately be expected to suit itself to the notions which it may have formed of its duty. In the one instance, every additional depression in the public morals will be measured and rebuked; and thus will a tendency towards reaction be naturally created; while, upon the other hand, all coming short is left without correction, and amendment becomes comparatively hopeless. If that which should restore, shall have, itself, become corrupted, how shall a remedy be sought? If the salt itself have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?

It is time, however, to make a few remarks upon some particulars of Evangelical principle and practice which appear to us to merit observation. "*The Church*" and "*the World*," we all know, are the two favourite phrases in the Evangelical vocabulary. They are, of course, used always antithetically; but seldom, we imagine, with much certainty of meaning. The wall of separation between them is frequently no more than the wall of a place of worship. Upon the world, however, and worldliness of every kind, Evangelical pity is profusely poured out. Now, would it not be well to get a definition of this miserable class? To enter a theatre or a ball-room; to take a hand at whist, or a part in a glee, are, with the Evangelical, marks, infallible, of a worldly mind; and all these things are sedulously shunned. But he may toil early and late to accumulate the wealth of this world; and strain every nerve in pursuit of the honours of this world; and live in the perpetual enjoyment of the luxuries of this world, and yet never suspect that he is in danger of becoming worldly at all! In business, are Evangelicals less greedy of profit; at the bar, are they less anxious for practice; in the church, are they less pleased with preferment; in the senate, are they less desirous of place, than any of the ordinary unregenerate upon whom they look down? "The love of money," says the Apostle, (he does not say one word about country-dances or cards,) "the love of money,"

says the Apostle, "is the root of all evil." In this sentiment, if we are to judge by the conduct of the religious world, they do not by any means concur.

For the "*pleasures of the world*," we often hear it said, the renewed in the spirit of their minds have lost all relish. Here again, perhaps, we are liable to be grievously deceived. The ball-room, as we have already intimated, is an utter abomination. But are our readers acquainted with the mode in which the piety that lives in style, is often accustomed to spend its spiritual evenings? The author of "*Fanaticism*," an Evangelical himself, has alluded to the extraordinary prevalence which, since the French revolution, Evangelical principles have obtained amongst the higher orders in these countries. With many of these, we are aware, that there are exceptions; a religious entertainment has many things in common with an ordinary rout. Round go the notes of invitation from the lady of the mansion, with all Arabia in their perfumed folds. The name of the popular preacher who has consented to lecture upon the occasion, is attractively announced within. The appointed evening comes. Equipage after equipage rolls up, in which both spring and cushion are contrived, so as to make the dreaded jolt impossible; the foaming steeds are suddenly reined in: down springs the fashionable footman to shake with thunder the astonished street; delicately afterwards the enfranchised fair descend, and through a long array of bowing menials, the sumptuous rooms are sought. Spread wide beneath, expands a carpet, unmatched by even British art; above, the blazing chandeliers pour down another day; on every side the splendid mirrors that line the spacious apartments, multiply the groups which, glittering in the spoils of a tributary world, press the voluptuous Ottoman, or occupy the draperied recess. While the younger ladies receive, with placid smile, the christian courtesies of the younger gentlemen; and general conversation about the Sabbath's sermon; or the speakers at the last Missionary meeting; or whereabouts, in all the East, Joseph Wolf may be just then; or the nature of the latest intelligence from the South Sea, agreeably employs the time, an elegant refection is served up. At length the company begin to look towards the lion of the evening; the lion of the evening begins to look additionally grave: a splen-

did bible is placed before him, in the universal hush; and each of the auditors—the gentlemen from their pockets, the ladies from their bags—draws forth a minor one, in rich morocco clad. A passage of scripture is then read; the leading Evangelical doctrines are eloquently enforced; and the service closes amidst a murmur of delight from many a gentle voice, which might, perhaps, prove dangerous to the preacher's humility, were he not absolutely invulnerable upon that point. Again the choicest viands and the rarest wines solicit the capricious palate; again, their superb equipages receive the departing guests, who, as they complacently contrast their own assembly with the concert and the dance, feel how infinitely the simple pleasures of religion, transcend all the boasted enjoyments of the world!

In our next we shall bring these observations to a close.

LAICUS.

ON THE WILDERNESSES MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,—Perhaps in the absence of other more interesting matter, the following extract from Mr. Hartwell Horne's Introduction to the Study of Scripture, may afford entertainment to some of your readers; at the same time that it may assist in the explanation of some passages in the Sacred Volume. With this view it is now submitted to you; and its appearance will much oblige,

A CONSTANT READER.

FREQUENT mention is made in the Scriptures of WILDERNESSES or DESERTS, by which we usually understand desolate places, equally void of cities and inhabitants. The deserts noticed in the Bible, however, are of a different description; as the Hebrews were accustomed to give the name of desert or wilderness to all places that were not cultivated, but which are chiefly appropriated to the feeding of cattle, and in many of them trees and shrubs grew wild. Hence this term is frequently applied to the commons (as they would be called in England) which were contiguous to cities or villages, and on which the plough never came. The wildernesses or deserts of Palestine, therefore, are twofold: some are mountainous and well watered, while others are sterile sandy plains, either destitute of water, or affording a very scanty supply from the few brackish springs

that are occasionally to be found in them; yet even these afford a grateful though meagre pasturage to camels, goats, and sheep.

The Deserts of the Hebrews frequently derive their appellations from the places to which they were contiguous. Thus the *Desert* or *Wilderness of Shur*, lay towards the north-eastern point of the Red Sea. In this wilderness, Hagar wandered, when unjustly driven from Abraham's house by the jealousy of Sarah (Gen. xvi. 7.) and the Israelites marched through this wilderness after they had miraculously crossed the Red Sea (Exod. xv. 22.) as they also did subsequently through the *Wilderness* or *Desert of Paran*, which lay considerably more to the south. (Numb. x. 12.) In this desert (which was situated in Arabia Petræa, near a city of the same name) Ishmael resided: and hence Moses sent out spies to bring intelligence concerning the promised land. (Numb. xiii. 3.) The *Desert of Sinai* was that in the vicinity of Mount Sinai in Arabia: here the Israelites were for a long time encamped, and received the chief part of the laws delivered to them by Jehovah through the ministry of Moses. The *Wilderness of Ziph* was contiguous to a town or village of the same name, and here David concealed himself for some time. (1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 15.) But the most celebrated of all is the *Wilderness* or *Desert of Judah*. (Psal. lxxiii. title.) The Desert of Judæa in which John the Baptist abode till the day of his showing unto Israel (Luke i. 80.) and where he first taught his countrymen (Matt. iii. 1. Mark i. 4. John x. 39.) was a mountainous, wooded, and thinly inhabited tract of country, but abounding in pastures; it was situated adjacent to the Dead Sea, and the river Jordan. In the time of Joshua it had six cities, with their villages. (Josh. xv. 61, 62.)

The vast *Desert of Arabia*, reaching from the eastern side of the Red Sea to the confines of the land of Canaan, in which the children of Israel sojourned after their departure from Egypt, is in the Sacred Writings particularly called THE DESERT; very numerous are the allusions made to it, and to the divine protection and support, which were extended to them during their migration. Moses, when recapitulating their various deliverances, terms this desert *a desert land and waste howling wilderness* (Deut. xxxii. 10.)—and *that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, scorpions,*

and drought, where there was no water. (Deut. viii. 15.) The prophet Hosea describes it as a *land of great drought* (Hos. xiii. 15.;) but the most minute description is that in Jer. ii. 6.—*a land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt.* These characteristics of the desert, particularly the want of water, will account for the repeated murmurings of the Israelites both for food and water (especially the latter:) and the extremity of their sufferings is thus concisely but most emphatically portrayed by the psalmist. (cvii. 5.)

Hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them.

In this our temperate climate, surrounded as we are with perpetual verdure and with every object that can delight the eye, we can scarcely conceive the horrors encountered by the hapless traveller when crossing the trackless sands, and exposed to all the ardours of a vertical sun. The most recent as well as the most graphic description of a desert (which admirably illustrates the passages above cited,) is that given by the enterprising traveller, Mr. Belzoni, whose researches have contributed so much to the elucidation of the Sacred Writings. Speaking of a desert crossed by him in Upper Egypt, on the western side of the Red Sea, and which is parallel with the great desert traversed by the Israelites on the eastern side of that sea, he says, “It is difficult to form a correct idea of a desert, without having been in one: it is an endless plain of sand and stones, sometimes intermixed with mountains of all sizes and heights, without roads or shelter, without any sort of produce for food. The few scattered trees and shrubs of thorns, that only appear when the rainy season leaves some moisture, barely serve to feed wild animals, and a few birds. Every thing is left to nature; the wandering inhabitants do not care to cultivate even these few plants, and when there is no more of them in one place, they go to another. When these trees become old and lose their vegetation, the sun, which constantly beams upon them, burns and reduces them to ashes. I have seen many of them entirely burnt. The other smaller plants have no sooner risen out of the earth than they are dried up, and all take the colour of straw, with the exception of the plant *harack*; this falls off before it is dry.

“Generally speaking, in a desert, there are few springs of water, some of them at the distance of four, six, and

eight days' journey from one another, and not all of sweet water: on the contrary, it is generally salt or bitter; so that if the thirsty traveller drinks of it, it increases his thirst, and he suffers more than before. But, when the calamity happens, that the next well, which is so anxiously sought for, is found dry, the misery of such a situation cannot be well described. The camels, which afford the only means of escape, are so thirsty, that they cannot proceed to another well: and, if the travellers kill them, to extract the little liquid which remains in their stomachs, they themselves cannot advance any farther. The situation must be dreadful, and admits of no resource. Many perish *victims of the most horrible thirst*. It is then that the value of a cup of water is really felt. He that has a *zenzabia* of it is the richest of all. In such a case there is no distinction. If the master has none, the servant will not give it to him; for very few are the instances, where a man will voluntarily lose his life to save that of another, particularly in a caravan in the desert, where people are strangers to each other. *What a situation for a man, though a rich one, perhaps the owner of all the caravans! He is dying for a cup of water—no one gives it to him—he offers all he possesses—no one hears him—they are all dying—though by walking a few hours farther they might be saved.—If the camels are lying down, and cannot be made to rise—no one has strength to walk—only he that has a glass of that precious liquor lives to walk a mile farther, and, perhaps, dies too.* If the voyages on seas are dangerous, so are those in the deserts. At sea, the provisions very often fail; in the desert it is worse: at sea, storms are met with; in the desert there cannot be a greater storm than to find a dry well: at sea, one meets with pirates—we escape—we surrender—we die; in the desert they rob the traveller of all his property and water; they let him live, perhaps, but what a life! to die the most barbarous and agonizing death. In short, *to be thirsty in a desert, without water, exposed to the burning sun without shelter, and NO HOPES of finding either, is the most terrible situation that a man can be placed in, and one of the greatest sufferings that a human being can sustain: the eyes grow inflamed; the tongue and lips swell; a hollow sound is heard in the ears, which brings on deafness, and the brains appear to grow thick and inflamed;—all these feelings arise from the want of*

a little water. In the midst of all this misery the deceitful morasses appear before the traveller at no great distance, something like a lake or river of clear fresh water. If, perchance, a traveller is not undeceived, he hastens his pace to reach it sooner; the more he advances towards it, the more it recedes from him, till at last it vanishes entirely, and the deluded passenger often asks, where is the water he saw at no great distance? He can scarcely believe that he was so deceived; he protests that he saw the waves running before the wind, and the reflection of the high rocks in the water.

“If unfortunately any one falls sick on the road, there is no alternative; he must endure the fatigue of travelling on a camel, which is troublesome even to healthy people, or he must be left behind on the sand, without any assistance, and remain so till a slow death come to relieve him. What horror! What a brutal proceeding to an unfortunate sick man! No one remains with him, not even his old and faithful servant; no one will stay and die with him; all pity his fate, but no one will be his companion.”

Terrific as the above description is, it is confirmed in most of its details, by Quintus Curtius; who describing the passage of Alexander the Great and his army across the desert of Sogdiana, thus graphically delineates its horrors “Amidst a dearth of water, despair of obtaining any, kindled thirst, before nature excited it. Throughout four hundred stadia, not a drop of moisture springs. As soon as the fire of summer pervades the sands, every thing is dried up, as in a kiln always burning. Steaming from a fervid expanse, *which appears like a surface of sea*, a cloudy vapour darkens the day. The heat, which commences at dawn, exhausts the animal juices, blisters the skin, and causes internal inflammation. The soldiers sink under depression of spirits, caused by bodily debility.” *Quint. Curt. lib. vii.*

In a different part of his narrative from that already quoted, Mr. Belzoni more particularly describes the *mirage* as the optical delusion above referred to, is now commonly called, in the following terms. “It generally appears like a still lake, so unmoved by the wind, that every thing above, is to be seen distinctly reflected in it. If the wind agitate any of the plants that rise above the horizon of the *mirage*, the motion is seen perfectly at a great distance. If the traveller stand elevated much

above the *mirage*, the apparent water seems less united and less deep; for as the eyes look down upon it, there is not thickness enough in the vapour on the surface of the ground, to conceal the earth from the sight; but if the traveller be on a level with the horizon of the *mirage*, he cannot see through it: so that it appears to him clear water. By putting my head first to the ground and then mounting a camel, the height of which from the ground might have been ten feet at the most, I found a great difference in the appearance of the *mirage*. On approaching, it becomes thinner, and appears as if agitated by the wind, like a field of ripe corn. It gradually vanishes, as the traveller approaches; and at last entirely disappears, when he is on the spot."

This optical delusion is called by the Arabs as it was by the prophet Isaiah (xxxv. 7.) the *serâb*; and to this day, the Persians and Arabs make use of this term, by an elegant metaphor, to express disappointed hope.

The phenomenon, here described, is produced by a diminution of the density of the lower stratum of the atmosphere, which is caused by the increase of heat, arising from that communicated by the rays of the sun to the sand with which this stratum is in immediate contact. This phenomenon existed in the great desert of Judæa, and is expressly alluded to by the sublime and elegant Isaiah, who, when predicting the blessings of the Messiah's spiritual kingdom, says:

The glowing sand shall become a pool,
And the thirsty soil bubbling springs.

And it is not improbable that Jeremiah refers to the *serâb* or *mirage* when, in pouring forth his complaint to God for mercies deferred, he says, *Wilt thou be altogether unto me as waters that be not sure?* (marginal rendering of Jer. xv. 18.) that is, *which have no reality*, as the septuagint translators have rendered it; ἡδωρ ψευδὲς οὐκ ἐχού πινύιν.

Frightful as the horrors of the deserts are, they are augmented beyond description, should the traveller be overtaken by one of those sand storms, which prevail during the dry seasons. Sometimes the high winds raise into the air thick clouds of dust and sand, which, descending like a shower of rain, most grievously annoy all among whom they fall, and penetrate the eyes, nostrils, ears, in short every part of the human frame that is exposed to it. At other times the sands are drifted into

such heaps, that if any storm of wind should arise, the track is lost, and whole caravans perish in the inhospitable wilderness. Such are the showers of *powder and dust*, with which Moses denounced that God would scourge the disobedient Israelites, in Deut. xxviii. 24.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN AMERICA.

[It is not often that we refer to the pages of the "*Orthodox Presbyterian*;" but the following piece of intelligence is of so very agreeable a nature that we cannot refuse to our cotemporary our ardent gratitude for presenting it to our notice; nor shall we do our readers the injustice of withholding from them the satisfactory announcement which it conveys. We had intended to give some account of the transaction referred to, from other sources: but for reasons which will be sufficiently understood, we prefer taking the narrative as it stands in the pages of the "*Orthodox Presbyterian*." Let it be observed, that the whole of the authority for the following statement is *Orthodox*. An American Orthodox publication contributes the principal facts: the Orthodox "*Presbyterian*," of Philadelphia furnishes the comment; both are adopted, reprinted, and circulated by the "*Orthodox Presbyterian*," of Belfast, with a few words of remark. We are so much pleased with the recognition of the "humbling" truth contained in our cotemporary's observations, that we forgive him his sneer at the American Presbyterian clergy as unlearned; and at the American churches as opposed to ecclesiastical establishments; simply reminding him that we heard nothing of the *first* objection when the Transatlantic Presbyterians were hallooing on the Synod of Ulster in the persecution of the Remonstrants, and that we probably should have heard nothing of the *second*, had not certain *banns*, published at the Hillsborough Orange meeting, been forbidden by the voice of Presbyterian Ulster. Enough, however, of introduction. In what follows, it is the *Orthodox Presbyterian* which speaks. B. C.]

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

[The following paper is extracted from an American publication. It gives an humbling view of the present state of the religious world there. From all we can learn, there is certainly much good doing—but there is also much evil. The source of the evil appears

to be the character of a portion of the ministry. And it behooves us to learn the necessity of a well-educated, and well-disciplined ministry, if religion would be preserved from injury. Let the enemies of establishments contemplate the state of the ministry in America, and see the working of their principle.—EDIT.]

FROM an abstract of the Report of the State of Religion in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, it appears that the labours of the ministers of that Church, have been in many places signally successful during the last synodical year. From the proceedings of the General Assembly, which was lately held in Philadelphia, there appear, however, to be wide differences of opinion among the members of that body, on several important points of Doctrine, Discipline, and Church Order. These points were warmly debated for some days. What is called the *New Divinity School* seems to have been ascendant. A protest against the alleged errors of the New School was presented to the Assembly, *and was rejected*. It has since been addressed “To the Ministers, Elders, and Private Members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States,” and signed by a very large *minority* of the General Assembly. The doctrinal errors objected to in this protest are the following; they are the opposite extreme of Antinomian Calvinism:—

1. *Our relation to Adam*.—That we have no more to do with the first sin of Adam, than with the sins of any other parent.

2. *Native depravity*.—That there is no such thing as original sin: that infants come into the world as perfectly free from corruption of nature as Adam when he was created: that by original sin nothing more is meant than the fact, that all the posterity of Adam, though born perfectly free from moral defilement, will always begin to sin when they begin to exercise moral agency; and that this fact is somehow connected with the fall of Adam.

3. *Imputation*.—That the doctrine of imputed sin and imputed righteousness is novelty, and is nonsense.

4. *Ability*.—That the impenitent sinner is, by nature, and independently of the aid of the Holy Spirit, in full possession of all the powers necessary to a compliance with the commands of God; and that if he laboured under any kind of inability, natural or moral, which he could not remove himself, he would be excusable for not complying with God's will.

5. *Regeneration*.—That man's regeneration is his own act: that it consists merely in the change of our governing purpose, which change we must ourselves produce.

6. *Divine Influence*.—That God cannot exert such an influence on the minds of men as shall make it certain that they will choose and act in a particular manner, without destroying their moral agency; and that in a moral system, God could not prevent the existence of sin, or the present amount of sin, however much he might desire it.

7. *Atonement*.—That Christ's sufferings were not truly and properly vicarious.

"Which doctrines and statements are dangerous and heretical, contrary to the gospel of God, and inconsistent with our confession of faith. We are painfully alive also to the conviction, that unless a speedy remedy be applied to the abuses which have called forth this act and testimony, our theological seminaries will soon be converted into nurseries, to foster the noxious errors which are already *so widely prevalent*, and our church funds will be perverted from the design for which they were originally contributed."

Against such *dangerous Pelagian errors*, it is as much the duty of Methodist and all Orthodox Arminians, to guard as the Orthodox Presbyterians. Such errors strike at the very root of the humbling and experimental doctrines of the gospel, *and lead directly into the fatal errors of Sabellianism, Socinianism, and Unitarianism.*

"The Presbyterian," (a most ably-conducted paper, published in Philadelphia, and *the organ of the Orthodox party*,) in adverting to the proceedings of the late Assembly, gives the following statement of parties, and concludes with some judicious advice:—

"Matters have been brought to a crisis. A favourable juncture has ensued for arousing the dormant energies of the church, and of appealing to the judgment and conscience of every one who may be willing to lend his aid in rescuing the doctrines and order of Presbyterianism from the hitherto insidious, but now *undisguised assaults* of her opposers. A blow has been struck, which must prove destructive, unless it produce a salutary reaction. Such blows we prefer from an opponent to those soft pretexts of peace-making, which have hitherto lulled into security, while they have betrayed to ruin. The line of demarcation is at length

drawn; the contest must hasten to an issue; parties must become distinctively characterised; and those who have hitherto professed to occupy neutral ground, will have no longer a pretext for maintaining their questionable attitude.

“The evils under which our church now labours, may be traced to two principal causes: the first is a desire to multiply her members, which, although innocent in itself, has become tinctured with unholy ambition; and then, secondly, as a suitable accompaniment of the former, a relaxation of strict principles, both of doctrine and polity, to remove the scruples of the hesitating, and open a wider door of admission.

* * * * * * *

“The late General Assembly was composed principally of young men, and particularly young in their experience of ecclesiastical proceedings, and was divided apparently into three parties—1. The Orthodox adherents to the doctrines and order of our church, who not only love the truth, but are not afraid to defend it at every hazard. 2. The New Lights, who have departed from the faith of our standards, and preach another gospel. 3. The middle party, whose professions are in favour of Orthodoxy, but who, in every vote which affected the ancient faith of our church, were found co-operating with those who impugn that faith. To us it has appeared truly surprising, that notwithstanding their professions, this last party should never, even as it were by a kind of accident, vote with the Orthodox, whose sentiments they profess to hold; but that they should uniformly be found recording their names with those, whose preaching and publications assail the very vitals of our church.”

Remarks on the Foregoing Statement.

WE KNEW IT! *We knew it from the first!* We never doubted the progress of religious truth and liberty in the Churches of America. We never supposed for one moment that stern bigotry and gloomy Calvinism could continue to flourish in the free breezes of the American continent. We entertained a firm persuasion, that in that favoured land of liberty, religious knowledge would rapidly extend her reign over minds, unshackled by civil restraints, or the prejudices of

antiquated but still powerful establishments. We felt convinced, that the country which had afforded an asylum to the persecuted Priestley, and which cheered the labours of Everet, of Norton, of Ware, of Palfrey, of Gannett, and of CHANNING, was not doomed to be the permanent abode of intolerance, and illiberality. We believed it was destined to a brighter doom than its own bigots and ours were willing to allow. The event has, sooner than we expected, justified in some measure our anticipations. Those illustrious Americans whom we have mentioned, have sown their seed in a watered soil: they have found it, and they have found it germinating, even *before* the lapse of many days. They have lived to see the fruit of their labours in many quarters; and not least remarkably, in the regions apparently most unpromising—those of American Presbyterianism.

It will be observed, that a numerously signed memorial was presented to the last meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches in America, against what are there called, *the Doctrines of the New School, on Our Relation to Adam: Native Depravity: the Imputation of Sin and Righteousness: Human Ability; Regeneration; Divine Influence; and Atonement.* The adherents of the *New School* on these points maintain, that men are no more chargeable with the guilt of Adam's transgression than with that of any other of their ancestors; that there is no such thing as Original Sin; that the doctrines of imputed sin and imputed righteousness are both novelty and nonsense; that man is endowed by his Creator with power to comply with the law which he is required to obey; that there cannot be such a divine influence as will certainly and infallibly determine the actions of men, without destroying at once human agency and accountability; and that there is no such thing as a vicarious sacrifice or satisfaction for sin. These doctrines are not merely "*opposed to Antinomian Calvinism,*" (as the American writer quoted by the Orthodox Presbyterian, modestly expresses it.) *They are subversive of every shade and modification of Calvinism! they are directly in the teeth of the Five Points as defined by the Synod of Dort! they are utterly and irreconcilably at variance with the declarations of the Westminster Confession and Catechism!* Nay, they go much farther. They are entirely opposite to every species and

degree of Evangelicalism. They attack the doctrines of Inherent Guiltiness, Atonement, and Divine Influence, as held by all those who wish to be accounted *Orthodox* :—Episcopalians as well as Sectaries : Methodists and Arminians, as well as Calvinists and Presbyterians ; and are capable of being reconciled with no system of religious belief, except that professed and held by Unitarian Christians ! It is with perfect truth that they are described in the foregoing extract as leading directly to Unitarianism ; and not without reason that the Philadelphian editor calls on the Methodists and Arminians to make common cause with the Calvinistic Presbyterians, for their overthrow and suppression.

Such are the doctrines against which a protest was presented to the General Assembly of the American Churches. It was debated for several days : the subject was viewed in all its bearings ; and in the end, *the protest was rejected* by a majority, which appears to have been considerable. A remonstrance against the *New School*, as it is called, has been signed and circulated by the opponents in the Assembly ; but it is consolatory to observe that this step has been adopted as the resource of a *defeated minority*. In the American Assembly, therefore,—an Assembly hitherto regarded as most Orthodox among the Orthodox ;—an association comprising the adherents of the Church of Scotland, and those of the Seceding bodies in America ;—an association, owning the Westminster Confession for its accredited creed and bond of union ;—and comprising 19 Synods, 98 Presbyteries, and upwards of 2000 Congregations ;—in the American General Assembly so constituted, and so distinguished, Unitarianism, or, at all events, *Christian liberty triumphs, and Calvinistic intolerance is borne down !*

There are some passages in the extracts given by the "*Orthodox Presbyterian*," which lead us to regard this victory as peculiarly important. It appears from the remarks of the indignant "*Presbyterian*," of Philadelphia, that it has been achieved, principally by the *younger* ministers. We have in it, therefore, a symptom that a generation of clergymen is rising up in America, superior to the old prejudices of their fathers ; and who, it may be expected, will every day be increasing in numbers, perseverance and influence. Fears are expressed lest the places of ministerial education should become so many seminaries for the *New Doctrines*. It would

appear, therefore, that these opinions have already made some progress among those who preside at the seats of learning. This may serve as an answer to the sneer of our Belfast cotemporary against the adherents of the *New School*, as an *uneducated* ministry. Whatever alarms it may please the "*Orthodox Presbyterian*" to affect on that score, it will be observed that his fellow-labourer in Philadelphia, by no means countenances the opinion which it is his policy to insinuate; namely, that the authors of the recent change are ill-informed and ignorant men. This innuendo may do very well on this side of the Atlantic; but those who are on the spot, and who know the circumstances of the case, declare their apprehensions to be built on very different grounds. *Their* whole alarm is, *lest education should be the means of diffusing the tenets which they dread*. This circumstance appears to us full of good omen. We receive it as an admission that the opponents of Calvinism number in their ranks some, at least, of the most learned, the most virtuous, and the most respectable members of their religious community; for to such men alone is the preparation of candidates for the ministry ordinarily intrusted. A third circumstance which must not be overlooked, is the cause to which the American editor traces the prevalence of the *New School* in the General Assembly. He says it is owing to an over-anxiety to swell the number of church members; in consequence of which many who were tinctured with heresy have been admitted. This is a tacit admission that Unitarianism (for in truth the *New Doctrines* are nothing else,) is predominant in all the surrounding sects of Christians from whom accessions to the Presbyterian body must come. It seems to be admitted that unless the adherents of the *New School* be received into the church, the church itself cannot increase its numbers as extensively as its members and ministers desire. Now, as the supporters of other creeds usually look with the utmost aversion upon the advocates of liberal christianity, this fact seems to us distinctly to imply, that at the time when the members whose reception is complained of, were received into the Assembly, the anti-calvinists formed the majority of those who were then unattached to Presbyterianism; and met with no very persevering opposition from those who were within its pale.

We have little doubt that the blow which has been struck will be followed up with vigour. The American Assembly will daily make progress in the way of Christian truth and gospel liberty. And perhaps in a few years, the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster may receive a letter of congratulation on the success of its efforts to establish its religious liberty, from the representatives of the same church which, in the spirit of sectarian uncharitableness, once congratulated the members of the Synod of Ulster "*on the all-important change which had taken place in the constitution of their body, freeing them from those who deny the only Lord God and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.*"—These were the insulting and calumnious expressions employed by the American Assembly in 1831, to designate the advocates of the rights of conscience in Ireland. It is pleasing to see the result of a few years deliberation. That same Assembly which in 1831 threw out these injurious reproaches against its persecuted brethren, is now preaching the faith and the freedom which once it laboured to destroy!

Before closing these remarks, we would call upon our readers to observe the taste and discrimination with which the "*Orthodox Presbyterian*" allots his censure and applause. An honest avowal of a few plain and simple truths, and an assertion of the eternal principles of religious liberty, he characterises as an "*humbling*" state of things. For such events he feels no exultation; for their authors no sympathy. But let wild fanaticism be let loose upon the land; let it sweep in the form of revivals, as a desolating hurricane over the face of the country; offending the pious, disgusting the judicious, grieving the spirits of the good, and putting weapons into the hands of the irreligious and the profane; and the whole soul of the "*Orthodox Presbyterian*," is sent forth in joyful pæans of triumph and applause! This is natural. Slaves must detest the spectacle of independence, as a reproach to their own servility; and the rantings of Finney, and the abominations of Beman, may well claim the commendation of those who, at an humble distance, are attempting to walk in their paths.

THE GLORIES OF CREATION.

ARISE, arise! it is not meet
 To crouch for riches to the ground :—
 A glorious world is at our feet,
 Ten thousand hang around !
 Look up ! a vault of vivid blue !
 A moving orb of living fire !
 Mountains of clouds careering through,
 In gorgeous attire !
 Look down ! resplendent is the sight
 Of flood and mountain, sea and land :—
 An ocean looking in its might !
 An earth, in beauty, bland !
 Valleys of green, and hills of snow,
 Meadows and forests, flowers and trees ;
 And rivers murmuring as they flow,
 To the wild warbling breeze.
 Beauties on beauties, in a ring
 Of ever-varying richness, throng ;
 While summer, autumn, winter, spring—
 Go hand in hand along !
 Look up, look up—once and again !
 The morn is coming from the deep !
 And stars on stars, to grace her train,
 Are starting from their sleep !
 Glory on glory ! the great sky
 Trembles with splendour ! and a flow
 Of hallow'd radiance, from on high,
 Encircles all below !
 O God, O God, the sin forgive
 Of being callous to the bliss,
 Of feeling that we breathe and live,
 In such a world as this !

OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THIRD CENTENARY OF THE REFORMATION AT GENEVA.

[At the request of several readers we present them with a translation of the letter from the Pastors of Geneva to the Presbyterians of Ireland, which appeared in our last number. This is the more necessary, as, owing to the Editor's absence, the French original was so incorrectly printed as to be, in many places, nearly unintelligible. B. C.]

To the Presbyterian Ministers of Ireland.

Geneva, Dec. 31, 1834.

Gentlemen, our highly honoured Brethren in Jesus Christ our Lord,

The Reformed Church of Geneva, is preparing to celebrate for the third time, the memory of the illus-

trious period, when renouncing darkness for light, it proclaimed religious freedom. You are aware to how great an extent the happy Reformation, adopted by that Church in August, 1535, has been a source of blessings to Geneva; and you can conceive with what religious emotion Genevan hearts are filled, at the approach of this new jubilee. You, our beloved brethren, who have also partaken of this unspeakable benefit, will share with us this emotion. Your prayers will be united with ours; and with us carrying your minds back to the times of deliverance when God visited his Church, you will implore for that universal church, the aid of his powerful protection for the present and the future. We intreat, especially, the communion of your prayers, for Sunday, August 23, 1835; the day on which all the Reformed Christians of our Canton propose to unite their voices in hymns of gratitude to their God and their Saviour. It will be sweet to us to feel upon that solemn day, that our brethren are rejoicing in our joy, and are mingling their souls with ours in a common sentiment of thankfulness!

Our desires are not limited to this request, dearly beloved brethren. We join to it another; that we may receive at the above-mentioned period, a visit from some of the members of your clergy. They shall be welcome among us; and we beg you to transmit to them our invitation, on the part of the Venerable Company of the Pastors of Geneva, and of its Committee appointed to preside over the festival of Jubilee. It would be infinitely agreeable to us, if, in compliance with this invitation, the various Synods or Presbyteries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland, should consent to send to us deputies, authorised to represent them at this festival. Their presence in the midst of us, will appear to us a precious means of rivetting the links of brotherhood, which we wish to render still more and more intimate, with the Reformed Clergy of Great Britain.

Bepleased, Gentlemen, and highly honoured Brethren, to accept the expression of our brotherly feelings, and of our sincere affection in Jesus Christ our Lord.

PH. BASSET,

Moderator of the Company of Pastors of Geneva.

JS. CHOISY, *Secretary.*

ON ALLEGATIONS OF ILLIBERALITY.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—With reference to the communication of "*A Dublin Lady*," whose letter appeared in the last number of the *Bible Christian*, I beg leave to state very briefly, my notions of charity and its opposite, illiberality.

It is not charitable to impute to an opponent in controversy, bad motives, on account of his difference of opinion, in itself considered.

But, on the other hand, it is not uncharitable to attribute to him such actuating principles as he himself avows, or as his general conduct clearly and indisputably implies. If these motives, thus avowed or necessarily implied, be bad, prudence may induce an opponent to forbear all allusion to them; but certainly such allusion, if made, cannot be considered as any breach of charity.

Again, in mentioning opinions, candour requires us to speak of them as no worse than we really believe them to be; never to misrepresent either their import or their tendency; but to state both (though the opinions in question be altogether at variance with our own,) fairly and impartially, as they appear to our deliberate and unprejudiced judgment.

But notwithstanding all this, it is not illiberal to characterise, in terms which we believe to be just, those doctrines to which we are conscientiously opposed. If I believe an opinion to be false, I am at liberty to say so. If I regard it as immoral in its tendency, no rule of candour requires me to profess belief in its innocency, or freedom from injurious consequences. If I deliberately regard it as dishonourable to the Deity, or fraught with degrading views of his character, it is no act of illiberality, freely to express what I strongly feel. I may, as in the former instance, from reasons of policy or expediency, suppress the statement of my convictions respecting any such tenet; but if I conceive it a point of such importance that mere prudential reasons ought to be disregarded, or if I suppose that the strong statement of my impressions is no unlikely method of causing them to be disseminated more widely,—I am not guilty of illiberality, if I publish my opinions to the world; nor am I to be charged with dogmatism if I acknowledge the right of others to dissent from my views, as fully and as freely as I claim my own privilege to form and to adopt them.

For these reasons, sir, I differ from the censure which "*A Dublin Lady*" has pronounced upon your other correspondent, "SIGMA," whose communications I regard as being exceedingly able, interesting, and valuable; and would earnestly hope that they may be continued with the same fervour and simplicity as their commencement displays.

There is a mode of arguing for the truth which looks like begging pardon for not being in the wrong. There is a way of defending her which consists in abandoning her bulwarks to the enemy. There is a style of speaking and writing which may be compared to fencing with a bated foil against a man who thrusts at you with a keen rapier. This is not the way to win the battle. Plainness of speech I regard as the best prudence.

I remain Sir, yours, &c. &c.

INDAGATOR.

TRACT DISTRIBUTION AT LYNN.

[*To the Editor of the Bible Christian.*]

SIR,—Among the many means of spreading a knowledge of Divine Truth, the distribution of Tracts appears to me to have several advantages. A good tract may be read and studied by a person who would not listen to its contents in an orally delivered argument. Its statements can be perused, weighed, and carefully considered at leisure. It may be taken up for study in some of those remnants of time which otherwise might be allowed to go to waste; and it never intrudes upon any one while occupied with concerns that distract his attention. A tract will not awake the opposition of slumbering prejudices to the same extent with an oral address; and it can be circulated from house to house so as to leave its impression upon many minds.

A difficulty is often experienced, in devising means for putting useful tracts into circulation; but, in my opinion, those who are desirous of doing good by the distribution of Tracts, intended to advocate the pure and intelligible faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, might take a lesson from the efforts of those who are labouring for the dissemination of the opposite doctrines; and as the latter very frequently distribute their tracts from house to house, throughout whole towns and districts, I do not see any thing to prevent the same means from being

employed on the other side. My attention has been directed to this subject by a notice in one of the religious periodicals ; by which it appears that the plan now suggested has been acted upon, in one place, at least, with the best results.

“ In the year 1833, some few members of the Unitarian Christian Congregation, King’s Lynn, considered it very probable that the cause of truth and virtue might be promoted by a free distribution of tracts, a plan which they knew had been long adopted by other Christian bodies. Having made known their opinion, and their readiness to become distributors, a meeting of the congregation was called to take the subject into consideration ; a sum was immediately raised for purchasing tracts, and seven young men commenced a weekly distribution, calling every Sunday morning for the tracts left the week before, and leaving another in exchange. The tracts, thus employed, are principally those printed in America, and by the “ Christian Tract Society.” Donations of books and tracts were presented on application, by the “ Unitarian Association,” and by the “ Eastern Unitarian Society.”

Such a proceeding in the present age could not be expected to pass unnoticed ; and, in addition to many private exhortations not to read the tracts, of which we heard from time to time, they were at last publicly denounced from the pulpit by a minister of the Established Church. Urged on, no doubt, by the same cause, the same minister, by handbill, announced his intention to preach a sermon, on Trinity Sunday, 1834, in scriptural defence of the Trinity. That we might hear this sermon, the Unitarian Chapel was closed ; but instead of a scriptural defence of the Trinity, it proved an unscriptural attack on Unitarians and their doctrines.

A public examination of this sermon was entered into the following Sunday at the Unitarian Place of worship, and the sermon being afterwards printed, an examination of it was also published ; of which, either singly, or stitched up with the sermon, several hundreds of copies were sold.

From this time, the demand for our tracts increased ; new readers were found every week ; and we have no doubt that, with more distributors, and a proper supply of tracts, the number circulated might be more than doubled.

Considering the circumstances which have been stated, we think the “ Lynn Unitarian Tract Society” may be

appealed to as pointing out the means by which a knowledge of the Unitarian doctrines may be considerably extended; and knowing the nature of those doctrines, it is not, surely, too much to encourage a hope, that the Cause of genuine Christianity—including the enlightening of the mind and the purifying of the heart—will be thereby promoted.” R.

Intelligence.

GENERAL SYNOD OF ULSTER.

THE Annual Meeting of this body was held at Belfast on the 30th of June, and the sittings were continued till the 11th of July; when it was found necessary to adjourn the assembly till the 11th of August; when the Synod is to meet at Cookstown for the despatch of such business as yet remains unsettled.

We cannot profess to give even a sketch of the principal proceedings. There was of course a great deal of bickering and squabbling among the members, as usual: but no day has been appointed as an occasion of solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the peace and harmony that prevail in the church. This omission we conceive to be an improvement upon the plan pursued last year; which was, *first*, to spend a great part of their meeting in discord and contention; and then to resolve to thank God that they lived at peace.

The subject of National Education has been adjourned *sine die*. Dr. COOKE was able, last year, to carry his resolutions only by a majority of *six*. This year he discovered that any farther agitation of the question would be a violation of his duty as a member of the Synod; as it could not possibly tend to concord and unanimity. It was accordingly postponed. Perhaps the Rev. Doctor may also have conceived that any farther discussion of this unpleasant topic would have been attended with some loss of his own influence in the Synod; and this may have strengthened his conviction of the impropriety of keeping up the agitation. Certainly his perception of the duty of promoting concord, has somehow or other, been marvellously quickened since the meeting of Synod in Derry, when the majority of ministers voted against him. Whatever may be the cause, we are not sorry to see the worthy Doctor a convert to measures of peace and conciliation; and only hope that he will act on the same principle, the next time he appears at Exeter-Hall, or at Hillsborough county meetings.

The Rev. GEORGE M'CLELLAND, of Ahoghill, the great champion of Scriptural Education, the roaring rampart lion who was to devour up the friends of the Education Board, and the National System,—was censured, and degraded from the exercise of his pastoral office for the excesses of his zeal: notwithstanding some special pleading in his favour by his friend Dr. COOKE, and some other ministers. It appeared, that although the worthy Doctor had been writing and publishing letters in vindication of Mr. M'CLELLAND, he had never approved of his proceedings.

The PRESBYTERY OF BALLYMENA were censured and rebuked for aiding and countenancing Mr. M'CLELLAND in his work of mischief.

The Synod agreed, without a division, to adhere to its former condemnation of Professor FERRIE, pronounced on *ex parte* and unpublished evidence, given in the absence of the person charged; and rejected a proposal from the Institution for providing instruction in Moral Philosophy to be administered to the Students of the Synod, under the direction of two other Professors, Messrs. CAIRNS and STEVELLY.

An Address was voted to the Lord Lieutenant, expressing high confidence in his Excellency's administration; and not saying one word respecting the National System of Education.

MEETING OF THE SYNOD OF MUNSTER, PRESBYTERY OF ANTRIM, AND REMONSTRANT SYNOD OF ULSTER.

This year, the three bodies of Irish Presbyterians who are distinguished by their rejection of human creeds, and their assertion of the right of private judgment, and the sufficiency of scripture, held their annual meetings conjointly, in Dublin, for the purpose of mutual intercourse and friendly communication. A very interesting and satisfactory meeting, was the result.

The Rev. Dr. Armstrong was commissioned to repair to Geneva, as the delegate and representative of the three churches above-named, and to carry to the brethren there, the assurance of their cordial esteem and sincere good wishes, on the occasion of the Centenary Commemoration of the Reformation of the Church in Geneva.

The following Address having been unanimously agreed to, was presented to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, by a numerous deputation; and was most favourably received.

To His Excellency the Earl of Mulgrave, Lord Lieutenant General, and General Governor of Ireland.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.—We approach your Excellency as a deputation of Ministers and Elders from the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster: three religious bodies, separate in their Jurisdiction, but distinguished from the other Presbyterian Churches in this Island, by their strict unanimity in maintaining the fundamental principles of the Reformation, viz.: the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, the right of private judgment, and the rejection of human authority in matters of faith.

Unalterably attached to these great principles, on which alone we conceive the sacred rights of conscience to be sustained, we feel peculiar pleasure in congratulating your Excellency on your appointment to the chief Government of Ireland, and in recording our gratitude to our gracious Sovereign, for selecting to discharge the duties of that high office, a nobleman so eminently distinguished for the firm assertion of the rights of humanity in a foreign clime, and for the enlightened advocacy of civil and religious liberty in his native land.

Sincerely desirous to cherish in ourselves and others the hallowed spirit of universal good will, so impressively inculcated by our

Divine Master, we deeply deplore the unhappy distractions of this portion of the empire, where the gospel of peace is too frequently perverted into an instrument of political discord, to the great scandal of our common christianity, the just reproach of our national character, and the baneful obstruction of our national prosperity.

It is, however, satisfactory to know, that the influence of the prejudiced and turbulent, is manifestly declining; and, that the friends of peace and good order, are the increasing portions of society. We indulge the pleasing anticipation, that the number of the peaceable and well disposed will be continually augmented by the impartiality of your Excellency's administration; the just and liberal policy of his Majesty's Government, and the steady progress of judicious reforms in the various institutions of the country.

Viewing the literary, moral, and religious training of the whole people, as the only secure basis of individual virtue, social prosperity, and national liberty; we rejoice in being able to afford our testimony to the BENEFICIAL TENDENCY OF THE NEW SYSTEM OF IRISH EDUCATION. By its admirable adaptation to the wants of this divided country, laying the foundation of harmony and friendship among the youth of all religious denominations in their united pursuit of knowledge, while it interferes not with the peculiar tenets of any Church: it has already secured the approbation of the judicious and moderate of all sects and parties; and when the political feeling, at present arrayed against it under the guise of religion, shall have passed away, we confidently anticipate its universal and grateful reception.

We assure your Excellency, that it is, and always has been, our earnest desire to co-operate, to the utmost of our power, with his Majesty's Government, in forwarding all objects for the promotion of peace and improvement in our native land. Situated in the most populous cities and enlightened districts of three provinces, and representing much of the wealth, intelligence, and respectability of the Presbyterians of Ireland, we will exert all our influence to promote obedience to the laws, loyalty to our king, and good will amongst our fellow-subjects of every denomination.

We entreat your Excellency to report of us to our gracious Sovereign, as being peaceable and loyal subjects, inflexible in our fidelity to the Constitution of these realms, and grateful for the blessings which, through Divine Providence, we enjoy under his benign and paternal sway.

It is our fervent prayer to the Throne of Grace, that your Excellency's patriotic exertions may be crowned with success, in allaying the fatal dissensions of Ireland, establishing the sole ascendancy of the laws, and uniting the hearts of all classes in promoting the peace and prosperity of our common country.

Signed, in the name and on behalf of the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.

ROBERT FERRIS,

Moderator of the Synod of Munster.

S. C. NELSON,

Moderator of the Presbytery of Antrim.

ROBERT CAMPBELL,

Moderator of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.

To the above address, His Excellency was graciously pleased to return the following answer:—

GENTLEMEN,—I have derived the greatest satisfaction from the disposition manifested, and the assurances conveyed, in this address, on the part of the bodies whom you represent; and, as exercising here the authority of our gracious Sovereign, I cordially thank you for it. When you speak of the value you justly attach to the sacred rights of private judgment and of conscience, it is, I am, indeed, proud to say, a subject on which I cannot be accused of indifference. It is a cause, to the promotion of which, my consistent, though humble advocacy, has uniformly been directed in Parliament. It is an object, to the protection of which, against persecution, my earnest endeavours were, from circumstances, peculiarly directed in that distant part of the globe to which you have alluded. The National System of Education, to the progressive benefits of which I am happy to receive your valuable testimony, was instituted with the benevolent desire to diffuse, as widely as possible, in this divided land, the practical precepts of our common religion.

As an attached member of the Established Church of my country, I cannot but regret, that the genuine spirit of universal Christianity should ever be lost in the jarring conflicts of disputed doctrines. The comparative truth, or error of fallible opinions, can only be decided for us by the Divine Founder of our faith, by whom we are, at the same time, taught, that the certain reward of good actions will be given to him who first extends to all the hand of brotherly love.

OBITUARY.

Died, on the 28th of June, 1855, Mr. WILLIAM FERGUSON, of High-street, Belfast. He was an old and respected member of the First Presbyterian Congregation, and exemplary in all the relations of life.

On Friday the 24th of July, 1835, at his house on the Lodge-Road, near Belfast, JOSEPH ANDREWS, Esq. Solicitor; son to JAMES ANDREWS, Esq. of Comber, County Down; greatly and deservedly lamented.

At Antrim, on Sunday the 26th, HUGH SWAN CARLEY, son to the Rev. James Carley of that town, aged 17 years. His opening virtues had excited many pleasing hopes which this melancholy event has blighted.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The account of the persecuted Emlyn has been received.

The Article on "Preaching and Preachers," in the present Number, should have been headed No. XI.

We request the attention of our literary friends to the notices we have already issued so frequently, of the necessity of letting the Editor have their communications early in the month.

W. J. In our next.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. VIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1835.

VOL. VI.

ON MUTUAL RECOGNITION, IN A FUTURE
STATE.

AMONG those mysteries which still remain to be disclosed, and those links by which the present and future life may be connected, is the question of re-union after death, and the mutual recognition of friends in the world to come.

That heaven will be a social state, may, I think, be concluded with sufficient probability, both from reason and scripture. Society seems indispensable to the happiness of all created intelligences. The ideas of society and happiness are inseparably interwoven in our conceptions of every subordinate state of being. A solitary state throughout eternity, cannot be thought of but as a scene, if not of misery, at best of apathy. All the representations of scripture, relative to angelic beings, imply social intercourse. This seems essential to moral excellence, as well as to happiness. If heaven be a scene for the exercise and improvement of virtue ; for the indulgence of the benevolent affections ; or for co-operation in the service and adoration of the Almighty ; it must necessarily be a state of society. If one of the occupations of the blessed be to increase knowledge, by the contemplation of the unfathomable wisdom and goodness of God, and the constant display of these attributes in the spiritual and natural creation,—we can, at present, hardly conceive, that these exercises would be attended with any high degree of enjoyment, without mutual communication. We may even hope to be associated, not only with the most excellent of our own species, but also with superior intelligences of consummate knowledge, virtue and benignity. In all these reasonable expectations, we seem to be encouraged by the author of Hebrews: “ Ye are come to Mount Sion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels : to the general assembly and church of the first born, who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of

all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." If this be a delineation of the future world, it may be deemed satisfactory, as far as the general intercourse of the blessed is concerned. But it still remains to be considered, whether a mutual recognition will take place, between persons, who have been endeared to each other in our present state.

On this subject, I apprehend, scripture affords us no ground, on which we can found an opinion; and therefore, as our reasonings must be extremely uncertain, so should they be conducted with great diffidence in our own wisdom, and equal confidence in the goodness of God. Under this impression we may rely, that if such renewal of our earthly connections be for our happiness, it will be allowed; if not, it cannot be desired. As an inference from this, we may further hope, that though it may not be desirable in every instance, yet if it would contribute to our felicity in any, it may, in such cases, be granted.

Such a hope is, no doubt, one of the most cheering consolations, attending a separation of friends; and it is, therefore, one that we readily indulge. The absence of any such expectation, would be a grievous aggravation of our affliction. The idea of an eternal separation from a beloved object, the bare apprehension of perpetual oblivion, and everlasting ignorance of its existence or its state of being, are so revolting to our state of mind at the moment of departure, when we feel the very suspicion of a momentary forgetfulness on our part as an affront, that we are disposed to adopt the sentiment of future re-union with, perhaps, too little discrimination.

Were we to contemplate a renewal of intercourse as a general law, it would be easy to see, that in most cases, it would not conduce to happiness; that in many, its tendency would be extremely doubtful; and that, in very few would it be a certain source of enjoyment.

If it were a general provision, we should recognize enemies as well as friends; and though we might be so refined as to forget our resentment and injuries, still we cannot look forward to that intercourse, as essential to happiness. When we consider, how few persons we hold in any high degree of esteem, how many of our acquaintances we meet with indifference, and part from

without caring whether we ever see them again ; and how very few there are, even of our most intimate friends, or warmest relations, to whose company we should like to be confined even for the short period of this life, our anxiety for a general re-union and recognition hereafter must be considerably abated.

With respect to those, in whose company we have taken the greatest delight, whose characters we hold in the highest estimation, with whom we have most cordially co-operated in private acts of friendship, or even in promoting the cause of religion, humanity, or the civil and religious rights of mankind ; we cannot tell, how far a renewal of intercourse in a future world, would increase the measure of our enjoyments. This doubt will be strengthened, the more we reflect on the particulars of those worldly affairs in which we co-operate ; on those qualities of person and conversation by which we are endeared to each other ; and even on those traits of character, which we hold in the highest esteem. Many of these circumstances can have no operation or existence at all in a spiritual state of being. Many of them, if recollected, would appear extremely trifling ; and some of those principles, on which we valued ourselves and our friends most highly, we might then know to be erroneous. Even those exertions in which we glory here, we may then condemn as criminal. In our present state, how many of those, whom we prized most highly in early life, do we hold in little esteem, to say no worse, in our maturer years ; and this not from any positive depravity, but from different degrees of refinement, different trains of ideas, courses of life, times of study or business.

Consider, how much of our pleasure, tenderness and attachment arose from the personal appearance and manners of our relatives or friends ; the elegance of their figure and deportment ; the beauty and expression of their countenances ; their obliging manners, and even the ties of kindred : and how little, if any, of these feelings and predilections can remain, when these qualities and connections may be all extinct. For though we have reason to think, that the human soul will continue embodied, we can hardly expect, that any personal resemblance shall remain. Our enjoyment is greatly enhanced, and our friendship strongly cemented, by our congeniality in taste, and our joint pursuit

of some favourite study; though these are sometimes attended with jealousies and bickerings. But all these pleasures and attachments must cease with their objects. Taste and learning shall exist no longer,—“when tongues shall cease, and arts and learning shall vanish away; for now we know only in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

Review in your own minds the trivial and even blamable circumstances in domestic, convivial, and social life, by which your strongest attachments are knit. If this review be attended with a degree of humiliation here, how will they appear hereafter? And if the bonds of friendship be thus loosened, how can the pleasure of the attachment remain? How, in short, could our recollection of this endearing intercourse with our relatives and friends continue without a particular recollection of the whole of this life: and may we not reasonably doubt, whether the remembrance of the events of our own series, or the general transactions of human society, would be accompanied with any self-gratulation, or in any other way contribute to our happiness?

If we should remember friendship and love, how could we forget enmity and jealousy, all of which, perhaps, were mingled in the same transaction: and if the one recollection should give us pleasure must not the opposite give us pain? Is it possible to recollect a kind friend, or a generous benefactor, without recollecting also the malice of the enemy from whom they delivered us, or the misery and poverty from which we were by their means extricated? Our greatest sources of pleasure are perhaps deliverances from distress and pain: can we remember the one and forget the other; and is such a mixed recollection consistent with the pure felicity of the blessed? Would it most conduce to our happiness to enjoy the company of an affectionate and dutiful child; or to our misery, to call to mind a profligate and abandoned one, excluded from the mansions of bliss?

This leads us to another deeply interesting reflection. If we shall delight in enjoying the society of those endeared to us here, must we not be sensible of the absence of others, perhaps not less dear? And how would the fountains of pleasure, that flow for ever from the throne of God, be embittered by such

afflicting, such agonizing, such incessant recollections of friends and relatives, parents and children, husbands and wives, banished for ever from the presence of God, consigned to everlasting sorrow, remorse and degradation! Even without supposing them to be in a state of positive suffering, we have every reason to believe, that there will be various degrees of happiness; and no reason to suppose, that every individual of a family or a friendly society, shall all be in precisely the same state; nor of course, that they can have intercourse with one another on an equality.

But were we to believe or even fear, that they were objects of divine wrath, and consigned to everlasting misery; should we not wish to die, if both could die, for ever—ransom our miserable friends, by resigning our own immortality; and be content like Paul, to be so far accursed of God for the sake of our brethren.

When we balance all these contradictory considerations, we shall be inclined to refer this, as well as every other dispensation, to the direction of superior wisdom. We may cherish the hope of re-union and revived intercourse, but at the same time, rest upon the assurances, that all will work together for good: that this natural wish and expectation will not be disappointed, except for our benefit; and that, if, in any case, it shall contribute to our future enjoyment, such a pure, rational and sentimental pleasure will not be withheld. After all, the doubts and perplexities which now involve this question, may be visionary, and the result of our ignorance. With man, this renewed intercourse may appear impossible, but not with God; for “with God all things are possible.” We may be endowed with a partial recollection, extending only to such persons, occurrences and qualities, as may contribute to our spiritual enjoyment; and we may be so far enlightened, as to view characters in the gross, without descending to particulars, or dwelling on defects.

I shall submit to your consideration, whether these hopes are increased by such texts as these: “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” “What is our hope, our joy, and our crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” which seems to intimate an expectation in Paul, to recognise his disciples at the

resurrection. The same sentiments seem to be expressed in these words: "Knowing, that he who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." "We are your rejoicing, even as you are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus." Moses and Elias are also introduced in company, at the transfiguration; and Lazarus is said to lie in Abraham's bosom.

Thus we are forced to leave this question as we found it, in the hands of one that will do better for us than we can imagine; since we can see that the general rule would not conduce to happiness, and that individual cases could make no part of a divine revelation. Whether the agitation of it will do good, I cannot tell; but, I think, it can do no harm; for every subject which directs our thoughts to heaven, must leave a solemn, religious impression on the mind; and even the contemplation of our most endearing connexions here, the certainty of our separation, and the uncertainty of our re-union, must tend to improve our minds, to strengthen our affections, to confirm us in the discharge of our social and domestic duties, while we have it in our power to perform them; to provide a happy re-union hereafter, if it shall please God to grant it; and, by a godly life, to guard both ourselves and them from the horrible prospect of final separation, endless regret, and everlasting despair.

In this perplexing state of the question, it may be gratifying to the reader to be informed of the sentiments of so eminent a person as Lord Brougham.

"It is inconsistent with the provisions of a benevolent power to suppose, that we should be made susceptible of such vehement feelings, and be suffered to indulge in them, so as to make our happiness chiefly consist in their gratification, and that then we should suddenly be made to undergo the bitter pangs of separation, while, by our surviving, those pains are lengthened out without any useful effect resulting from our sufferings. That such separations should be eternal, appears irreconcilable with the strength of the affections wounded, and with the goodness so generally perceived in the order of the universe. The supposition of a re-union hereafter, overcomes the difficulty, and reconciles the apparent inconsistency."

"We may conceive that, hereafter, such of our affections as have been the most cherished in life, shall survive and form again the delight of meeting those from whom death has severed us; that the soul may enjoy the purest delights in the exercise of its powers, above all, for the investigation of truth; that it may expatiate in the full discovery of whatever has hitherto been most sparingly revealed, or most carefully hidden from its view; that it may be gratified with the sight of the useful harvest reaped by the world from the good seed which it helped to sow." *Id.* p. 134.

NEMO.

ON BENEVOLENCE.

BENEVOLENCE is a word which, according to its original import, signifies *wishing well*, or a disposition to do good. But, as a good or kind disposition is generally accompanied, in some degree, by the *power* of doing good—the term is frequently and properly used to represent the virtue of both desiring and promoting the happiness of those sentient beings that come within the sphere of our influence. The word *benevolence* is also employed to denote that attribute of the Deity, which he has manifested in imparting a portion of his own felicity to his intelligent and percipient creation.

Some philosophers have advanced the hypothesis, that benevolence and selfishness are one and the same principle. But, if by selfishness be meant, that low and grovelling passion which seeks for gratification at the expense of others' happiness, and which is seen to operate most powerfully in the conduct of the most depraved individuals; then it will be obvious, at a single glance, that the principle of benevolence cannot fairly be identified with that passion, or arise from it as its source; the slightest acquaintance with human nature showing us, that those characters which have the greatest selfishness are in possession of the least benevolence.

If, however, by selfishness be understood what is sometimes called *self-love*, the truth of the hypothesis will hardly admit of disputation. To the writer of this paper it appears inconceivable, that there exists in the human mind any principle which renders us alive to the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, or induces us to

relieve their wants, and soothe their sorrows, except that of self-love or sympathy; the consciousness of our being partakers of the same nature as others, and susceptible of the same pains and afflictions. We do not mean to say, that the good man performs acts of beneficence in order to be rewarded, or to become, in his own turn, the object of compassion or relief; but we do say, that he is actuated by the pure satisfaction which he himself feels in the bestowal of happiness, and by the natural powers of the human mind in enabling us to fill in imagination the places of those whom we love or pity. For instance, the man of benevolence, when he beholds a fellow-being about to perish in the overwhelming flood, does not calmly look on, and inquire within himself, what shall be his reward for rescuing the drowning individual—what emoluments or honours he shall receive from man—what blessings he shall obtain from God. No: such a mode of acting would be truly selfish, and unworthy the character of a good man. What does he do? He, at one and the same instant, imagines *himself* in the sufferer's place, and rushes into the waters, heedless of his own real danger. This is true self-love—sympathy—benevolence.

“Self-love and social are the same.”

From the description of man's nature given by some writers, we should be led to suppose, that he is a being of pure, unmixed malevolence. But we have no hesitation in affirming, that, if the principle of benevolence be not innate, it is at least more agreeable, than its opposite, to the human mind. Little children, when not led away by the influence of evil example, or of an erroneous education, discover in their actions a decided predilection for the benevolent qualities. Their innocent looks; their playful smiles; their simple manifestations of gratitude for small favours received; their affection for their parents, particularly for their mothers; and a thousand other things, which may be seen and understood, but cannot be expressed;—all concur in evincing the natural benevolence of the human heart. True, that in the progress of human life, amid the competitions of boyhood and youth, as well as amid the business and bustle of manhood, and the cares and anxieties of advanced age; the affections of nature too frequently become soured—the virtuous emotions

are rendered feeble and inoperative, and the whole heart is made the receptacle of principles and habits, foreign alike to the virtue of the individual, and to the welfare of society. But all this we conceive to be the work of circumstances—of example—of an improper education. If fathers, and mothers, and nurses, and teachers, were earnestly and assiduously to train up the infant and the youthful mind, we doubt not that there would be fewer complaints respecting the nature which we have received from the universal Parent. Paradoxical as it may appear, we do think that hardly in the most depraved disposition, whether thus by nature or by society, is the benevolent principle altogether extinct. The most abandoned of the human species—men who have lived by rapine and blood—highwaymen, and conquerors more bloody-minded than even they—are perhaps not altogether insensible to the sympathetic emotions. The ambitious warrior has been seen to drop a tear of pity over the millions of his fellow-creatures whom he had slain; the spoliator of others' property, reckless of his own safety, has scorned to betray his guilty associates; and the murderer himself, who had imbrued his hand in the gore of a once-beloved wife, has yet embraced his offspring with the kiss of natural affection.

The seeds of benevolence being thus discoverable in those who have little more of humanity than its external form; what may we not expect from human nature when unvitiated by the anxieties, the false pleasures, and the vices of society? Say not, ye false philosophers!—ye gloomy religionists! that human nature is corrupt at its very core—that the human heart is altogether black and depraved. Slight not your Creator, by undervaluing or vilifying the work of his hands. Man, indeed, is not angelic or divine; but he is not demoniacal. He is still human—having human emotions—human affections. He is, besides, the moral image of the Deity, and forms the noblest portion of that glorious universe which the Almighty at its creation pronounced to be good. Tell us not, then, of Nero, of Caligula, or of Gesler: humanity shudders at the mention of their names, and would gladly disown them; and the very detestation in which they are universally held, proves to a demonstration, that the nature of man is diametrically opposed to the passions

and the conduct of such individuals. If you would behold the height of moral grandeur which man is capable of attaining, think of those great and good persons that have not only adorned humanity, but blessed the species to which they belonged. Think of a Socrates, of a Milton, of a Washington, of a Rammohun Roy,—and thank your Maker that you are recipients of their nature, and may be their fellows in moral, if not in intellectual worth.

But we shall perhaps be told, that these individuals form only a fraction of the human race, and ought not therefore to be exhibited as a specimen of man. Granted that few of such individuals have existed, compared with the millions of ordinary men that have breathed the breath of life. But do we not all rejoice that these persons were in possession of our common nature? Do we not glow with rapture and admiration, when we read how they felt, and thought, and laboured for the promotion of others' happiness? Do we not imbibe a portion of their divine spirit, by entering in imagination into all their plans of benevolence—into all their labours of love? And does not this sympathy with all that is mighty in mind—with all that is fair or beneficent in morals, powerfully prove that human nature is not that insignificant, that loathsome, that brutal thing which it is sometimes represented to be?

The following eulogium by a distinguished orator, on the character of Howard, the philanthropist, is much and deservedly admired; and will convey a better and more vivid idea of genuine benevolence, than any remarks which we could possibly make.

“I cannot,” says Mr. Burke, “name this gentleman without remarking that his labours and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe—not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosities of modern art; nor to collect medals, or collate manuscripts: but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, oppression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original: it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery—a circumnavigation of charity.”

Excellent, however, as is the character of Howard, it is much inferior to that of his great master Jesus Christ. In his bosom flowed all the milk of human and of divine kindness. He tenderly loved his mother; he regarded his disciples with the most affectionate esteem; he cured all kinds of diseases—raised the dead to life—spoke words of tender welcome to the repentant sinner—and gave lessons of heavenly wisdom to the ignorant and the poor. He took little children up into his arms, and blessed them. He was deeply susceptible of the claims of friendship. “Behold,” said the Jews, “how he loved Lazarus!” He delighted in the happiness of those nations that were regarded by his countrymen as their natural enemies. He forgave his deadliest foes: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” He loved the land of his birth, and wept bitterly at the prospect of Jerusalem’s ruin; but his benevolence, so far from being confined within the narrow limits of Palestine, was capacious as the universe itself. He came into the world, not to free his country from the fetters of Roman bondage, but to snap the more galling chains of vice, emancipate the human mind from prejudice and error, and crumble into pieces the wall of partition that separated the Gentile from the Jew. Jesus Christ was the messenger of heaven, the messenger of love, and peace, and happiness. “He,” literally, “went about doing good:” he lived and died for our good: he has gone to prepare a place of eternal felicity for those who love him, and imitate his blessed example.

Benevolence, as before suggested, is also an attribute of the Deity. This information we acquire from various sources;—from observing that goodness pervades every province of the universe with which we are acquainted—from reading in revelation’s book the effulgent characters of love and mercy which illumine every page; and from being conscious that the faint rays of benevolence which shine within our own souls, are derived from the eternal Source of good and bliss. We could not, in truth, have the faintest conception of God’s goodness, were it not that our hearts have been formed by him to the perception of goodness. From feeling a disposition to promote the happiness of others, we are led to conceive of the goodness of the Deity,

by extending it to infinite perfection, and divesting it of every particle of selfishness.

On this interesting subject we would fondly dilate : but, for want of space, we can merely recommend to our readers the valuable work of Paley on Natural Theology, particularly his chapter on the goodness of God ; and the equally valuable, but more eloquent treatise of Southwood Smith on the Divine Government. The former author points out the kind regards of the Supreme Being for the happiness of his creatures, which are discoverable not only in those vast bodies which stud the firmament with light and glory, and which seem to have been made for exalting and improving the human mind, as well as for conveying light and heat to the globe which we inhabit,—but also in the organs, and powers, and habits of those animals which are deemed by man to be the most insignificant. The latter writer, however, not only traces the footsteps of an intelligent and all-wise Creator, but discloses the benign countenance of an infinitely merciful Father. He not only evinces the goodness of God in the adaptation of means to promote general happiness ; but he demonstrates that all the evil, whether natural or moral, which exists in the world, is designed by the Governor of the universe for the promotion of universal felicity. But whatever opinion may be formed on this subject, no one can reasonably doubt, that, under the direction of an all-powerful, all-wise, and all-gracious being, “whatever is” will eventually be found to be “right.”—“GOD IS LOVE.”—“His tender mercies are over all his works.”—“Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without the care of our heavenly Father.”

W. J.

PREACHING AND PREACHERS.

NO. XII.

(*Evangelical Preaching concluded.*)

“THERE are those pretenders to the spirit, who take all other christians to be heathens ; into whose party, no sooner does the vilest person adscribe himself, than he is, *ipso facto*, dubbed a saint, hallowed and dear to God. There are the confidants, who can design the

minute, the place, and the means of their conversion,—a schism full of spiritual disdain, incharity, and high imposture, if any such there be on earth.”*

“There is no new thing,” saith the wise man, “under the sun.” We might almost, in the same manner, conclude that there is no new thought. Some of the oldest sentiments, both in philosophy and religion, appear, occasionally, to have their youth renewed, and pass, upon the inexperienced, for notions newly born. We are apt to be deceived by the greatness of the interval which separates the incarnations of the same opinion, and to wonder at many things as novelties, because they are, in reality, so completely the reverse. This is a fact which must have struck every examiner who sinks below the surface. It will be familiar to all persons who have studied, in any degree, the geology of mind, that many a form of idea, apparently of recent origin, is to be found imbedded in some of the lowest of the strata which mark the early history of the spiritual world. The quotation which we have given is an instance of this nature. Evangelicism, altogether, is by many considered as one of the inventions of the day. Those parts of Evangelicism, particularly which have been borrowed from the Methodists, are looked upon, by the same persons, as the newest of the novel system. We have here, however, a passage written centuries ago, by an author whose name has perished, and directed against a party long nominally extinct, which, but for a certain relish of antiquity in its style of composition, might well stand for an invective against some of the most distinguishing peculiarities of Evangelical practice and belief. Thus applied, it would be as true as invectives generally are. But it would, still, be an exaggeration of the truth. That they, we mean the Evangelicals, “take all other christians to be heathens,” can hardly be denied. We are not sure, indeed, that some of them (*Dominum Dens auctorem sequentes,*) do not consider the condition of the heathen preferable. This fact being admitted, the existence of the “incharity,” and “spiritual disdain,” from which it springs, will scarcely be disputed. But that the Evangelicals as a mass, are “full of high imposture,”—

*Scott's Somers' Tracts, vol. 7, p. 180, quoted from Southey's Life of Wesley.

or any imposture whatsoever, is a position which, though often asserted, we never can admit. Hypocrites there are, of course, with them, as there are with every other body. It is probable, indeed, that such characters are oftener to be found amongst the Evangelicals, than amongst any other class of christians, except, perhaps, the Methodists. The reason is obvious. Where there is the greatest exhibition of religious feeling, there there will be, at once, the least likelihood of its being natural, and the greatest temptation to affect it. The existence of pretenders may, therefore, in such cases, be considered as an unintended tribute to the excellence of what they assume. But how few, after all, are the instances brought forward,—sometimes, we fear, with secret exultation, to justify a sweeping charge of insincerity? With God, ten righteous men would, of old, have saved a city. With us, upon the other hand, it would appear, that ten wicked ones would warrant its destruction.

Let us, then, confine ourselves to charges which can fairly be supported. Of this description, we think, are those of *uncharitableness*, and *spiritual pride*. These, in fact, are not so much two different principles as the same principle in two different aspects. A man becomes proud of his own graces only by comparing them with the deficiencies of his neighbour. When we talk about conceit of any kind, we mean a sense of superiority which, living as it does upon the depreciation of others, is extremely apt to “make (even where it does not find) the meat it feeds on.” We think that the tendency of Evangelical Preaching, if not to cause, at least to foster those unamiable qualities, is undeniable. Dr. Urwick, of York-street, Dublin, a very eminent man, does not use the *Lord's Prayer* in his pulpit, avowing that he will not encourage persons to call God their father, of whose claims to be by faith considered his children, he, Dr. Urwick has not had, himself, an opportunity of judging!

People so impenetrable in their assumed infallibility, as the Evangelicals, are to be found no where else in Christendom. The Pope, meek man, is but a trifle to them. They are, certainly, the most forward to read lectures to other people, and the least inclined to dream of any possibility that they may be, themselves, mistaken, of any sect or party, in these kingdoms, reli-

gious or political; always, of course, excepting the Utilitarians. All who have had any considerable intercourse with them must have remarked this. "I should decidedly say," exclaims Mr. Irving, "that I have met with no people so unwilling to listen to what contradicts, or even enlarges upon their few ideas, who resent as an insult, as a personal insult, that you should differ from them in anything; who are so rude and riotous against every one who does not row in their boat, or steer their course, as are the people commonly called the religious world."* That these things are so can occasion no surprise. The wonder would be, were they otherwise. For how stands the matter with our brethren in this respect? Believing, as they all do, the Calvinistic Evangelical by his unchangeable decree, and the Arminian Evangelical by his "essential doctrines," that the "only name given under heaven," has been bestowed on them alone,—taught the truth by no mortal teaching, and enlightened by a wisdom which is hidden from the wise,—contrasting their own glorious lot, whose voices are to blend hereafter in angelic harmonies, with the lost condition of the myriads whose tones of anguish shall add fresh horror to the howlings of the damned,—they become, inevitably, puffed up by an opinion of their own peculiar privileges, and disposed to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think. Those who live under the bitterest curse of God, can be no fit companions for those who are the exclusive objects of his choicest blessings. Exhorted, as they perpetually are, to come out and be separate from a world, from the fate of which they have been mercifully and miraculously called, it is impossible but they should seek to "vindicate the ways of God to man," by cherishing a tacit or avowed conviction, that all who are doomed to glut throughout eternity His unintermitted vengeance must, in reality, (no matter by what specious guise they may conceal their guilt,) be criminals of the blackest die. They, therefore, act accordingly. Families are divided; friendships are interrupted; "stand off, for I am holier than thou," is a command virtually addressed to many, united to the utterers, by the tenderest ties. Wesley's moderation was inclined to soften, in some degree, the harshness

*Discourses on the Last Days, p. 376.

of the rule ; but, even he, one would think, was sufficiently decided. A convert had consulted him respecting her duty towards those members of her family who had not adopted her peculiar views. In reply he writes, "as for your relations, *even your brothers and sisters*, if they are *of the world*, you are under no obligation to be *intimate* with them ; you may be civil and friendly *at a distance*."* Even at a distance, however, it is not always that such conduct is exhibited. Upon everything appertaining to religion, a consciousness of caste is perpetually manifested. Estrangement is practised as a duty. To separate themselves from those who once were dear, is a heavy task upon the carnal heart, but God has not signalized them with so many marks of His especial favours, that they should hesitate to conform their conduct to His ways, or refuse to deny themselves any criminal indulgence. The father that begat them must, if necessary, be shunned ; are not they commanded to cut off a right hand ? The mother that bore them must also be given up ; is not the plucking out of a right eye a sacrifice required ? We are far from saying that the principle now treated of, is, always, rigidly pursued. Willing as the spirit may be, the flesh, in spite of it, will, now and then, be weak. Nature, after all, is hard to be subdued, and often does she triumph over the determinations even of the elect. Often do they fall into the generous inconsistency of loving those whom, they believe, God hates, with the truest and most tender love. But that the operation of spiritual pride is sensibly and severely felt, in the way which we have mentioned, no one, we suppose, will venture to dispute. This, however, is only one of a thousand ways, in which it works. It exercises, not unfrequently, a most pernicious influence upon the temper. First and foremost there is the awful dogmatism which it induces. As surely as there is a heaven, an Evangelical will not hesitate to tell you, so surely, is he certain, that he himself will dwell there throughout an eternity of glory. As surely as there is a hell, he will go on to say, you must, unless grace be given you to adopt his views, become, for ever, its tormented occupant. Oppose either of these positions, and you will soon perceive the rise of passions which

* Southey's Life, p. 520.

are not of celestial origin. To be sure, your adversary will not, actually, curse and swear. But he will utter his scriptural denunciations in a tone and manner which pretty nearly serve the same purpose.

The truth is, that our Evangelical brethren are not upon their guard against the sins that most easily beset them. Because they so vehemently abjure the doctrines of merit, of every description, and in every degree—they think themselves completely out of danger. To humble the sinner and exalt the Saviour is, as we mentioned in a former paper, the Evangelical criterion of sound preaching. But is there nothing in the doctrines of grace to swell the bosom of a believer with spiritual pride? May not a man be as vain of his gospel privileges, as of his moral practice? It would not, we think, be difficult to show from history and human nature, that he is much more likely to become inflated in the one case than in the other. The most abject humility that ever crawled upon the ground, may yet have concealed within it the organs by which it is, afterwards to soar aloft, as the wings of the butterfly lie folded in the grub.

In such other remarks as we may have to offer, we must be very brief. The next observation which we wish to make, will not detain us long. It is connected with the almost inevitable tendency of Evangelical opinions towards continual advance. A proper balance between man's reason, and man's feelings, constitutes the true religious tone of mind. If this noble equilibrium be lost, two dangers, opposite indeed, but equally to be feared, invariably present themselves. Where the mere intellect is allowed to preponderate unduly, there is the danger of cooling down into scepticism. Where, upon the other hand, warmth of feeling obtains too much the mastery, there is the danger of flaming up into fanaticism. It is to the latter that the Evangelical world is exposed. In the perpetual ebb and flow of human emotion, nothing remains stationary. In order that we may not retrograde, it is necessary that we should go on. The topics of Evangelical Preaching, as we have already pointed out, are extremely limited. Constant repetition has a tendency to pall, and as variety is impossible; increasing the intensity, becomes the only means of continuing the effect. Amongst the Methodists, some degree of that novelty which sustains

the interest of the people, is secured by the constant change of ministers. But the Evangelicals, properly so called, are destitute of such assistance. Hence they will have recourse to other modes of operation. Moral machinery of a new description must be got up in order to carry on the work. Stimulants must be made stronger, where those usually administered have ceased to operate as they were wont. Then, men of ardent minds begin to carry out the doctrines of the system to their full extent. They exhort the church to shake off the spiritual lethargy which paralyses her energies. The faith of the primitive times, is, alone, wanting to bring back the powers of the primitive times. Mighty outpourings of the spirit are confidently promised, and there is every where abroad, a feverish seeking after signs. This is the true history of the "*Revivals*," in America, and of the "*miracles*,"* and the "*manifestations*," in these countries. These things bewilder the warm and the weak; and the more moderate, who, naturally, become alarmed, are upbraided for their deadness to spiritual things. Their own positions are turned against themselves; the consequences which they impugn, are shown to be legitimate deductions from the premises which they admit, and they are only left a choice between what is inconsistent, and what is absurd. Mr. Finney, the head of the Western Revivalists, advertng to the opposition experienced in their labours, observes, "again we see why ministers and

* Some of our readers may not be aware of the existence of any Evangelical miracles. Miss Fancourt's was a curious case, and one productive of an extremely lengthened controversy. The young lady, it appears, had been afflicted, for a considerable time, by an obstinate spinal complaint. We extract the following passage from the account which she published of her cure, by the Rev. Mr. Greaves, an Evangelical divine. It details the conversation which was held at the time, between the minister and the patient. "Do you believe Jesus could heal as in old times? Yes. Do you believe that it is only unbelief that prevents it? Yes. Do you believe that Jesus could heal you at this very time? Yes. During this whole time the holy man was looking on me most steadfastly. To describe his countenance, is impossible, it was heavenly. He then added, 'Get up and walk—come down to your family.' He then had hold of my hand. He prayed to God to glorify the name of Jesus. I rose from my couch quite strong. God took away all my pains, and we walked down stairs; dear Mr. G. praying most fervently." *Christian Observer*, for 1830, p. 710.

christians visiting revivals often, at first, raise objections to the means used, and cavil, and sometimes take part with the wicked. The fact is, coming as they often do from regions where there are no religious revivals at the time, they feel reprovèd and annoyed by the warmth and spirit which they witness. Now, while *their hearts remain wrong*, they will, of course, cavil, and the more spiritual and holy any thing is, so much the more must it displease them while their *affections grovel*.* So much for the Revivalists. The "manifestations" men, again, have just as little mercy. "It is true," says Mr. Drummond, the well-known banker, "that notwithstanding my great personal regard, and even affections, for those persons of repute in the Evangelical world, with whom I had the pleasure to be acquainted, I perceive that *they are sceptical as to the greater part of what the Bible contains*."† Thus it is, that the movement parties in the religious world regard all who refuse to follow in their march,—thus it is, that those who are accustomed to boast their exclusive enjoyment of light and liberty, are pitied as though they also were holden in dungeons deep and dark!

Connected with the topic just adverted to, is another to which we cannot help alluding. The extent to which *female* agency is exercised throughout the whole working of the Evangelical system is, certainly, without a parallel. Much of this, no doubt, is common to every form of belief. Women are almost instinctively religious. They are calculated to realize in the most intense degree, the raptures of devotion, by their purity, their weakness, and their tenderness of feeling. They will always, therefore, see the sights and hear the sounds of the spiritual world, with a distinctness which the duller organs of the other sex can never reach. But there is much in Evangelical Preaching and opinions which tends vastly to increase this natural propensity, and to draw the female character additionally forward. "*Frames*," and "*feelings*," as we have already pointed out, are considered, amongst our Evangelical brethren, as the great ends of preaching, and the sure evidences of salvation. The merit of a discourse is wholly measured by the effect which the hearer feels or fancies it

* Boston Christian Examiner, March, 1829. *Art. "Revivals."*

† Letter in the "Morning Watch."

has produced within himself. As Mr. Irving rather querely remarks in his "Last Days," men speak of a sermon in the same language, and perhaps with the same gesture of the hand, "*smiting the body in the same place*, with which they speak of a *dinner*, It did me good, sir, I feel the better for it." Under these circumstances, it is clear, that the ladies are likely, from their quicker sensibility, to be much more affected than their sluggish lords. The showers and sunshine which, naturally, belong to the April of their existence, are much more favourable to the growth of spiritual excitement, than the wintry bleakness and frostiness of feeling which distinguish, comparatively, the colder temperament of their companions. Imagination spreads with them her widest wings, and belief is an element of their very being. The consequences follow which might have been anticipated, and females are found to take the lead in almost all religious enterprises. They preach; they pray; they engage with eagerness in controversy. At Brussels, some time ago, Lady Powerscourt regularly lectured considerable numbers of the British residents. In Dublin, we understand, Lady Harberton, and others, are accustomed to harangue large audiences stately convened. The extent to which similar proceedings were carried on in London, produced, not long since, a leading article in the "*Times*" newspaper. Thus far, however, in the opinion of every Evangelical, all is right. The weak things of the world have been selected by One whose right to choose is not to be disputed, and the wind that bloweth where it listeth must be allowed to breathe on whom it wills. If the ladies confined themselves to the foregoing, or to furnishing Evangelical Preachers with wealthy wives, (for the cases in which these gentlemen obtain large fortunes in the matrimonial way, are almost ridiculously frequent,) every thing would be well. But it is a lamentable fact that the tendency towards advance, of which we have already spoken, almost invariably, appears at first, amongst the gentler half of the creation. The Antinomian secession, in the West of England, in 1817, was, in a great degree, the result of female influence. "The tongues," (not unnaturally, some may think,) originated in the same quarter. "It is hardly necessary to say," observes Mrs. Trollope, speaking of the American Revivals, "that all who

obeyed the call to place themselves on the ‘*anxious benches*,’ were women, and most of them very young women.” The comparative evils and advantages of this state of things we cannot pause to estimate. Certain it is, however, that it has overcome the patience of some whose ire, one would think, ought not to be excited by it. Dr. Burns of Paisley, for instance, gets quite into a passion with certain damsels who felt themselves called upon to enlighten the darkness of that Reverend divine. The vials of his wrath are poured out upon the audacious heads of those “young ladies, whose voice of disputation or of prayer is heard in the streets; who tell, *sang froid*, their seniors in years, and intellect, and experience, that they perceive with grief, that they do not yet know the truth, &c.”* But, Doctor dear, why all this indignation? Be pleased to call to mind that it was just you, and such as you, who first encouraged that meddling self-sufficiency which you now, so angrily denounce. We should never have heard one word from you about “years, and intellect, and experience,” had they been *heretics* who were assailed,—no, not one word. Has he then, who sets fire to his neighbour’s house, a right to complain that his own is endangered by the conflagration? We trow not.

Every attentive observer of the Evangelical world, must have been struck by the prodigious interest which is engrossed by the religious societies which abound within it. This, again, is a natural consequence of Evangelicism as invariably preached.† An exclusive creed operating upon a benevolent mind, necessarily leads to proselytizing efforts. Where an attention to the duties of every-day life affords no test of spiritual proficiency, a zeal for the dissemination of saving truth is likely to become the principal criterion. Restrained within due limits, such a principle cannot be too highly prized, and the noble liberality with which our Evangelical brethren have acted on it, ought always to receive an honourable mention. But what is there which may not be carried to excess? We cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that the active support of religious societies, which has come to be considered as the

* Gairloch heresy tried, p. 26.

† See Preaching and Preachers. No. II. Bible Christian, vol. 5, p. 155.

principal obligation of the christian—has generated a perpetual restlessness of disposition ; a pushing and driving and bustling spirit of pietism ; a sort of sacred avarice as far as money is concerned, and a craving after the excitement of platform speeches and missionary sermons, which cannot but have the strongest tendency to produce, in the minds of those over whom they exert their influence, a disrelish for the exercise of humbler and more homely graces which can never cut a figure at Exeter-hall, or at the Rotunda. That both are often combined, we are well aware. But that they are separable, we also know, and we could give good Evangelical authority in favour of the position which we have ventured to lay down. So far as to its operation in the laity. As to its influence upon the clergy, we shall quote an anecdote which we have extracted from a discourse of the Rev. E. Irving. “It is now seven years since the thing occurred which I shall now relate. Upon my first coming to this city, I was the bearer of a letter to a very worthy man and a good christian, as I believe, now no more. After he had perused it, he spoke to me with great emphasis and seriousness: ‘sir, it is not by preaching, nor by attending to your own flock, that you must prosper in this city; the number, sir, of religious societies, and the great good which they do, ought to be the chief care with you as it is with ‘such an one,’ and ‘such another one,’ naming over some of the most famous ministers in the city.” I looked into his face to see if he were serious or speaking in satire, of the state of things. When I saw that he was serious and solemn, I could only wonder in my own mind, and calmly assure him that, by the grace of God, I would walk in the old paths, and feed my flock, upon which he admonished me, as became a man of his years, and we parted, never to meet again, for he *was soon carried to his long home.*”*

Although aware of the length, to which this paper has already reached, we must say a word or two upon the manners and language which obtain, for the most part, in Evangelical society. The dogmatism which deforms the first, as far as religious matters are concerned, we have already mentioned. Of the propriety of that sweeping condemnation which is awarded against

*Moaning Watch, vol. 1, p. 658.

our ordinary amusements we shall here say nothing. The utmost soberness of general demeanour may, we admit, be steadily maintained, disconnected altogether from any unkindliness of feeling. But we think we may appeal to all who may have had an opportunity of judging, whether there is not, sometimes, observable, in persons of the greatest sweetness of disposition, who have become "converted characters," a change in the habitual deportment which is, by no means, an improvement; whether their tempers do not appear to have undergone, in some degree, the acetous fermentation; whether a certain severity of manners does not begin to show itself where it is impossible to conceive it called for; whether their old reluctance to hurt or wound, has not given place to an apparent disregard of the feelings of those with whom they come in contact; whether the gentleness which used to characterize their judgments concerning others, has not been succeeded by a censorious bitterness; whether they do not discover an unamiable superiority to all those small compliances, which if they be not the minor morals, are, at least, the graceful sins of social life? It is of the choicest spirits, be it observed, that we have here spoken. On sterner minds and harder hearts, a worse influence is exercised. Fanaticism has been defined to be religious enthusiasm, inflamed by an admixture of the malignant passions. Can we be blind, then, to the frequency with which the most virulent enemies of Popery, exhibit, in their conduct all the worst parts of Popery, or fail to see that many a Protestant bosom, in our own times, swells with a spirit as relentless as that which animated the Dominics, and the Escobars, of the ancient superstition?

The language of our Evangelical brethren is, for the most part, peculiar to themselves, and not to be mistaken. A variety of authorised expressions are in vogue, from which no departure is permitted. Any alteration in the form of announcing a doctrine, occasions just as much scandal as an open attack upon its substance. Scriptural expressions are applied perpetually, sometimes to the meanest uses, and many truly pious persons fall unconsciously into capt. We shall illustrate what we mean by an example. The "Record" newspaper, our readers are aware, is the great organ of the Episcopalian Evangelicals, in England, and enjoys, in that capacity, considerable circulation. Advertisements

of a very strange description appear continually in its pages, and we shall mention two or three which we lately stumbled on by accident. "Wanted, for a Parish in Yorkshire, a Curate of decided piety, and a *strong voice*. If married his wife must be both a *Mary* and a *Dorcas*." We saw, repeatedly, another commencing thus, "Two friends of the *Lord Jesus*, wish to borrow £500." The housemaids, who advertise in the "*Evening Mail*," frequently announced, for obvious reasons, that they are "members of the Established Church." The housemaids who advertise in the *Record*, (perhaps for reasons similar) as frequently request none but "religious" masters and mistresses to apply; and make it a condition of engagement that they may "have the advantage of a Gospel Ministry." Footmen, now and then, are equally fastidious. It was but the other day we read the following, in the publication which we have already mentioned: "Wanted, by a steady man, a situation as footman, in a pious family. His object is to obtain a place where he may live in all honesty and Godly sincerity, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. N. B. He would engage either in or out of livery, and in town or country." These things, to be sure, are only trifles; but they indicate the love of Evangelical phraseology. Language of this kind would not be used by persons seeking situations, if those who are expected to confer them were not well known to countenance it.

We have still many things to say, but we must hurry on to a conclusion. The only other topic to which we shall advert,—it is one of great interest and importance,—we shall dismiss with little more than a bare notice. Evangelicism, both in its preaching and in its practice, exhibits, we think, a constant tendency to narrow the intellectual range, and impair the mental powers. The contempt or aversion which it almost invariably manifests for literature and science, it is by no means studious to conceal. There are a variety of reasons why this should be the case. Spiritual pride will despise mere carnal knowledge; those who wage war with human reason will not put weapons into their adversary's hands,—to the eye which measures, unceasingly, eternal things, the things of time will become dwarfed by the comparison. In the alarm which precedes conversion, no human acquirements can give consolation;—to the peace

which accompanies conversion, no human acquirements can at all contribute. With them, therefore, religion is not a generous fountain diffusing itself upon all things around it, but an absorbing eddy, drawing all things around it down into itself. Those, besides, whose most important tenet is the abject degradation of humanity, can have but little relish for the records of its greatness and glory. The splendors of nature shine not for him who sees a darkening curse impending over the creation,—man delights not him who finds nothing in his kind to love or reverence. The effects are obvious. Our very tongue is stinted of its words, and a whole class is proscribed as Anti-Christian. Manliness, and magnanimity, and generosity, and heroism, and the magic name of genius, and the glorious sound of liberty; these are terms you never read in an Evangelical book, or hear in an Evangelical discourse; or perceive the use of in Evangelical conversation. Poetry, in any thing of an extensive sense,—poetry which is not as sulphurous as Pollock's, or as sickening as Montgomery's, has no charm; "it has no relish of salvation in it." The declamatory sermon; the missionary narrative; the enthusiastic tract; the religious magazine; are not these the components of which Evangelical reading is made up? An Evangelical nobleman sinks a splendid edition of Shakspeare in his pond; and in an extensive reading society, of whose proceedings an account was published, the Waverly novels escaped, by the smallest possible majority, a sentence of exclusion as irreligious and profane!* The only religious party whose principles, in this respect, can be compared with those of the modern Evangelicals are the ancient Puritans. But in the case of the latter there were circumstances to counteract the narrowing and enfeebling tendency of which we speak. The Puritan, no doubt, participated in much that dis-

* Since the foregoing article was put into type, the editor of this publication has heard of another instance of the same kind, which deserves to be recorded.—A Clergyman of the Established Church, Rector of a parish in the neighbourhood of Belfast, on being, not very long ago, converted to the doctrines of Evangelicism, actually committed to the flames, in his own court-yard, a choice collection of ancient and modern classics, which he had been some years in forming, and which was valued at several hundred pounds! His assistant in the pious work was also a clergyman and a minister in the Establishment.

tinguishes the Evangelical. Like him he had his mind fixed on other objects than the literature that amuses, or the science that puffeth up. Like him, he believed that a copious stream of wisdom flowed perpetually from heavenly fountains to fertilize his mind for the production of every thing that could be really termed good. Like him, therefore, he disdained to irrigate his understanding with the trickling rills of human knowledge. But, upon the other hand, the Puritan's position was a momentous one; he was constrained to make common cause with civil liberty; he ruled the storm in tempestuous times; he was a statesman, and he was a soldier; now he debated matters of the weightiest interest in the hall of council; now he toiled dauntlessly in the fields of stricken battle; at home, he trampled church and king and aristocracy beneath his feet; abroad he opposed a bold and British front to the haughty dignitaries of Austria and Bourbon. Duties such as these were calculated to form, not certainly cultivated or accomplished minds, but minds of pith and power. None of these intellectual gymnastics does the modern Evangelical possess; and the want of due exercise, consequent upon that circumstance, cannot but induce decrepitude of mind.

We have now discharged, inefficiently, we are aware, but not, we hope, unfairly, the task which we assigned ourselves. From time to time, we have submitted to the readers of the Bible Christian a sketch of Evangelical preaching—we have pointed out its peculiar nature—investigated the grounds of its popularity, and estimated the religious character which it has contributed to form. In considering the last branch of our subject, we were led to offer some remarks upon the religious world, generally, which appeared to us to be sufficiently connected with our leading object to justify their introduction.—That these remarks have been of a questioning, if not a depreciatory character, we admit. Our Evangelical brethren have a strong *prima facie* case in their favour. That they possess moral purity; religious sincerity; ardent zeal, and devotional fervor, we have, all along, cheerfully allowed. All then which remained for us was to give our reasons for thinking that their moral purity might not prove permanent, and that their other excellencies do not exempt them from the common imperfections of humanity. They have had amongst them noble names; men of whom the world was not

worthy,—spirits of the just, we doubt not, now perfect. Hallowed be the spot where sleeps the hoary head of Newton, and green be the sod upon the honoured grave of Scott! But even in the presence of men like these, we speak what we do think.

In our next paper we shall proceed to consider, what is usually termed “MORAL PREACHING.”

LAICUS.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 307.)

CHAPTER XXV.

V. 1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

In this parable our Lord confirms his admonition of watchfulness, in xxiv. 44. It was a custom among the Jews for the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, to proceed to the house of his betrothed bride with torches, and to be met by virgins with lamps, who escorted him to the house of his spouse. On this occasion some unexpected circumstance had delayed the procession till late at night; so that some young women had expended the oil in their lamps, and while they went in quest of a supply, the company had proceeded to the nuptial entertainment, and the door was closed.

It is to this splendid appearance of the bridegroom coming out of his chamber, that David likens the sun; Psalm xix. 4, 5—

This parable admonishes to be provident and vigilant, and not to depend on others for our admission to the kingdom of heaven.

V. 13. Wherein the Son of man cometh.

These words are omitted by Griesbach.

V. 15. He gave five talents.

A talent was equivalent to £193 15s.; but its value varied in different times and places.

V. 27. With usury [interest.]

V. 29. From him that hath not.

He that has made no improvement shall be deprived of the opportunities that he neglected.

These servants enjoyed unequal advantages, but their improvement of them was equal. They therefore received the same commendation, “Well done,” &c.

V. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.

The word here translated *everlasting*, is often used to express a long but indefinite duration.

This and the equivalent expressions are frequently confined to the existence of the person or thing spoken of; as when it is said that God's name was to be in Jerusalem *for ever*; and Israel to be his people *for ever*; the expression means during the continuance of the Jewish state. The kingdom and the house of David, Saul, and others, shall be established *for ever*; that is, they shall be in prosperity as long as they last. A yet more limited period is intimated, when Achish said he would make David "the keeper of his head *for ever*;" and when a slave is said to serve his master *for ever*; which can signify only during their lives.

We meet with similar examples in the New Testament. Thus, "the servant abideth not in the house *for ever*; but the son abideth *for ever*," during their lives. Paul says, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no more flesh while the world standeth;" or *for ever*, as it is in the original; and he beseeches Philemon to receive Onesimus *for ever*; that is, for life. See John viii. 35; 1 Cor. viii. 13; Philemon, ver. 15.

CHAPTER XXVI.

V. 1. 2. Wednesday before Easter.

These two verses should not have been separated from the last chapter.

V. 5. Not on the feast day.

It should be rendered, *Not during the feast*, which lasted eight days, during which the Jews from all countries assembled at Jerusalem.—*Newcome*:

V. 6. Simon the leper.

He had been a leper, and still retained that appellation.

V. 12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

It was usual to embalm bodies of the deceased before burial.

Jesus accepted the act of this pious woman as an affectionate anticipation of his death. This woman was Mary the sister of Lazarus who resided in Bethany; John xi. 2; xii. 2, 3.

V. 15. And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

A slave was rated by the law at thirty shekels of silver, which, if we reckon them at half a crown (which is supposed to have been about their real value,) amounted to no more than £5 15s. of our money,—*a goodly price that he was prized at of them*, Zech. xi. 15.—*Doddridge*.

V. 17. Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread.

Thursday, the day before he suffered.

V. 22. The night before the crucifixion.

V. 23. He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

In Barbary, and probably in the East, when the food is any liquid substance, after having broken their bread in little bits, they dip their hands and their morsels together into it.—*Shaw's Travels*. “They supped in the Arabian fashion; that is, all persons present helped themselves with their hands out of the same dish.”—See journal of a passage from India, &c.

V. 24. The Son of man goeth.

We often, in common speech, say of a person, “he is gone,” intimating that he is dead.

V. 25. Thou hast said.

This is the import of the phrase: *It is as thou hast spoken*. See Matt. xxvi. 63, 65; Mark xiv. 61, 62.; Luke xxii. 70; John xviii. 37.

V. 26. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread [Gr. the loaf.]

Hence it appears that the institution took place during the paschal supper.

“Blessed *it*.” It is not expressly said in the original that Christ blessed *it*, that is, *the bread*; (nor indeed that he brake *it*;) but it is very reasonable to imagine that this thanksgiving was attended with a prayer that the divine blessing might accompany the bread. And it is plain from 1 Cor. x. 16, that the apostles taught christians to bless the cup.—See Brief Notes, Matt. xiv. 19.

The words of institution are all figurative: the bread is put for his body, the cup is put for the wine, and the wine for his blood, the blood is the sign of the New Testament, and Testament is put for the gospel. In like manner the lamb is called the Lord's passover, (Luke xxii. 7; Exod. xii. 11) of which it was the sign; and Christ calls himself *the true vine* and *the door*, John x. 9—xv. 1.

Some contend that the words should be understood literally.

V. 29. I will not drink henceforth of the fruit [produce] of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you, &c.

When a new order of things arises, Matt. xix. 28; when my ministry is finished, John xix. 30; when I am risen from the dead, and my kingdom is begun, Luke xxii. 18. Accordingly, Jesus ate and drank with his disciples, while he continued on earth after his resurrection.

V. 30. And when they had sung [or recited] an hymn.

This probably was the Hallel, which the Jews were obliged to sing or recite on the night of the passover. It consisted of six psalms, the cxiii, and the five following. This they did not sing all at once, but in parts. Just before the drinking of the second cup and eating of the lamb, they sung the first part; and on mixing the fourth and last cup they sung the remainder, and said over it what they call the blessing of the song, which was Psalm cxlv. 10. They might, if they chose, mix a fifth cup, and say over it the great Hallel, which was Psalm cxxxvi; but that they were not obliged to do.

V. 34. Before the cock crow [the morning watch, called the cock-crowing.]

V. 36. Gethsemane.

This, Mr. Maundrel informs us, is an even plat of ground, lying between the foot of mount Olivet and the brook Cedron.

V. 39. Not as I will, but as thou wilt [willest.]

V. 47. Staves.

This is the plural of staff, not of stave.

V. 52. All they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword.

All is here used for *many*; and the Greek word for “perish” signifies *usually perish*. To be slain is the usual consequence of engaging in war.

V. 57. The morning of the crucifixion or Good Friday.

V. 60. But found none.

None that would answer their purpose.

V. 61. To destroy the temple of God.

See John ii. 19, &c.

V. 63. I adjure thee by the name of the living God.

This was the Jewish manner of administering an oath.

V. 65. Then the high-priest rent his clothes.

The Rabbins say, “He that heareth blasphemy, or even the relation of it by others, is bound to rend his garments. Judges must stand up to perform this ceremony, and their clothes are never again to be mended.” Sanhedrim vii. 5. See 2 Kings xviii. 37—xix. 1; Macc. xi. 11.

V. 68. Prophecy unto us [guess or divine to us.]

V. 73. Thy Speech bewrayeth thee.

Thy Galilean dialect and pronunciation discovereth thee.

CHAPTER XXVII.

V. 2. Deliver him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

The usual residence of the Roman procurators or governors, was Cesarea; but, during the principal festivals of the Jews, they removed to Jerusalem, that they might be ready to quell any tumult or sedition, that was likely to arise in consequence of the great number of people that usually assembled there on these occasions.

The Jews not having the power of inflicting punishment, and desirous that he should be put to death, delivered him to Pilate.

V. 3. Then Judas, which betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, &c.

Judas may not have apprehended that Jesus would have been put to death, or delivered to the Roman governor.

V. 5. Hanged himself. [Gr. Strangled himself.]

V. 9. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet.

This prophecy is not in Jeremiah, but in Zech. xi. 13. "Jeremiah" may have been written instead of "Zechariah" through the error of some copyist, as proper names in ancient MSS. are frequently abbreviated.

Verses 9 & 10 should be enclosed in parenthesis.

V. 14. And he answered him to never a word, [to no one matter. N.]

Verses 18 19. should be read as a parenthesis.

V. 24. He took water and washed his hands.

This Pilate may have done in compliance with the institutions of Moses, which in the case of an unknown murder, ordered the elders of the nearest city to wash their hands publicly and to say, "Our hands have not shed this blood." See Deut. xxi. 6. 7. This was probably a common practice in the East. In allusion to this law the Psalmist says. "I will wash my hands in innocence."

V. 26. When he had scourged Jesus, [commanded to be scourged,] he delivered him to be crucified.

The execution of the Roman governor's sentence fell in course upon the Roman soldiers, and this insured that particular kind of death which our Lord had predicted; for crucifixion was not the punishment which the Jews appointed for the crimes wherewith Jesus was charged; but it was one which the Romans inflicted upon offenders of the meanest condition, or those who had been guilty of the most atrocious and flagitious crimes.

V. 28. They stripped him of his outer garment [or mantle.]

V. 29. And when they had platted a crown of thorns.

Some interpret this, of the acanthus or bear's-foot, and intended as derision not as torture.

V. 35. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they did cast lots."

This is omitted by Griesbach.

V. 36. They watched him there.

They set a watch to guard the crucifixes, ver. 54.

V. 37. "*This is Jesus the king of the Jews.*"

The Romans used to set forth the cause of punishment in a few words; or to proclaim it by a herald.

V. 45. There was darkness over all the land [of Judea.]

From noon till 3 o'clock of Good Friday.

That this darkness was not natural is apparent, for our Saviour suffered at the time of the Jewish passover when the moon was at full; but natural eclipses of the sun happen at the time of the new moon.

V. 46. And about the ninth hour.

Our third hour in the afternoon, which was the time of the Jewish evening sacrifice : as our nine in the morning when our Lord was fixed to the cross, was the hour of the morning sacrifice.

V. 46. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?

This is not the exclamation of despair or complaint, but of suffering and of prayer, adopted from the Psalmist, Ps. xxii. 1.

V. 47. This man calleth for Elias.

They mistook the former part of the exclamation in the last verse, for the vocative case of the prophet's name.

V. 50. Yielded up the ghost.

Gave up his spirit. Breathed his last.—*Newcome*.

Literally it is, *dismissed his spirit*. See John, x. 18.

V. 51. The veil of the temple was rent in twain, &c.

There were two veils of the temple, one at the entrance into the holy place ; the other between the holy place and the sanctuary, or holy of holies, called the inner veil, or the second veil, Heb. ix. 3. See Exod. xxvi. 31. 33.

V. 52. And the graves were opened, &c.

Some German critics are of opinion, that this and the next verse were interpolated from the spurious or corrupted gospel of the Nazarenes. The passage, indeed, stands alone, and it is not to be found in any of the other Evangelists ; but this is no decided proof of interpolation, as each of them has something peculiar to himself.

V. 54. Truly this was the Son of God, [Gr. Son of a God.]

The centurion was certainly a Roman, among which people it was not an uncommon thing to stile a person of remarkable abilities or courage, the offspring or "the son" of some deity : in consequence of this custom, when the centurion saw the circumstances which attended this event, he was convinced, that though Christ was executed as an impostor, yet he could not be less than a *Son of a God*.—*Bishop Sherlock*.

V. 55. Between three and six o'clock.

V. 57. When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea.

The evening of Good Friday.

"Arimathea," a city of Judea, called by the Hebrews, Ramathaim Sophim, and thought to be the same as Ramathaim-Zophim, 1 Sam. i. 1. In the time of St. Jerome, he says, "it was called Ramola, and now Rama." This text agrees with Isaiah, liii. 9. "He shall make his grave with the rich in his death."

"When even was come." The Jews buried malefactors before sun-set. See Deut. xxi. 23. The time between our three and six o'clock was their first evening.

V. 60. And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door, [or entrance] of the sepulchre.

They laid Jesus in [Joseph's] own new tomb, which he had lately ordered to be hewn in a stone out of a solid rock: to which therefore there could be no passage but by the door, and in which no man was ever yet laid; so that there could be no room to imagine any other person rose from thence.—Doddridge.

V. 62. Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation.

“Next day,” Saturday, or the morrow after the crucifixion.

“Day of preparation,” our Friday, the preparation-day for the Sabbath on the following day; which Sabbath was a high day, or solemn festival.

V. 63. We remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again.

Our Lord foretold his resurrection sometimes obscurely to the Jews, John, ii. 19, Matt. xii. 40; sometimes expressly to his disciples, Matt. xvi. 21, &c.

V. 65. Ye have a watch.

This alludes to the guard of Roman soldiers, which was at this time allowed the Jewish rulers, for the purpose of quelling tumults, and preserving the public peace.

V. 66. Sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

And setting a watch, literally, together with the guard; that is, in company with, attended, by the guard.

REVIEW.

The Works of William Ellery Channing, D. D. vol. I. pp. 466. James Hedderwick and Sons, Glasgow, 1835.

WE rejoice to have an opportunity of drawing the attention of our readers to the volume before us. We have often regretted that the writings of Channing are not known and studied as they deserve. There is no author of the present age, that has done more for the cause of humanity and truth. A spirit of fearless free inquiry breathes through every page of his writings, and powerfully tends to chase away the mists of prejudice from the mind; to vindicate the dignity of man from the aspersions under which it has too often sunk; to inspire a hatred of despotism, a love of freedom, and assert the principles of the faith, whose language is “*Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good*

will toward men." The intellect and the virtues of Channing have given a new tone to religion and morality in his own land; they have spoken with power to his fellow countrymen, and implanted the principles of primitive christianity in many a heart, that would otherwise have been encrusted with the current prejudices of the day,—but their influence has as yet been partial; they will rise, and spread, and operate, when the mind in which they grew shall have passed to a more congenial world; when the shadowy form and sickly frame from which they emerged, shall have sunk under the power of death.

We have a reverence for Channing, deeper and holier than for any living man. We reverence him because he has taught us, so far as humanity can teach, the spiritual and benevolent nature of that God who created the immortal mind, and gave it the vast theatre of nature, and the vast world of Revelation, in which it may enlarge, and strengthen, and approach nearer and nearer to His own pure existence. We reverence him because he has placed our Lord and Saviour before us in his true and heavenly character, as the universal Redeemer of man—the sun of righteousness, to illumine what is dark—to vivify what is dead—to purify what is unholy within us; yet ever shining, on the page of scripture, and in the breast of his disciple, to the glory of his God and Father. We reverence him because he has taught us the high dignity of our own being—its heavenly origin, and its heavenly destiny, in opposition to the teachings of those who, in affected humility, would represent man, in all his faculties and powers, as one mass of corruption, impurity, and imperfection. Above all, we reverence him, because he has devoted the high energies of his mind, to the maintenance of our holy religion, against the assaults of scepticism, and the opposition of infidels; and against the more dangerous, because less alarming opposition of those who would mingle up their own imaginings with the pure word of God—corrupt the stream of gospel truth, by turning it into the channel of their own prejudices, and make the word of God of none effect, by engrafting their traditions on the tree of life. We rejoice in Channing as a Unitarian. Unitarian christianity, (for alas! christianity has been associated with another doctrine, than the strict and essential unity of the Father) Unitarian

christianity has not grown up in the popularity of the world; it has not been nursed in the lap of Royalty; it has not been gorged with wealth—glutted with dominion—pampered with luxury; as in the days of its founder and his apostles, even so till the present time, it has been struggling against the tide of popular opinion, and the storms of earthly persecution; but it has commanded the homage of the high in principle, the exalted in intellect; and among the noble army of apologists that have contended for the verity of the christian faith, the most illustrious are those that belong to this unpopular creed. But there is not one in all that distinguished phalanx, whom we are disposed to regard with more interest than the author before us. He does not indeed possess the critical acumen, and the laborious research of a Lardner, or a Priestley; nor is he endowed with the deep philosophy of a Newton, or a Locke; but he is gifted with a quickness and energy of thought, that almost irresistibly speak conviction to the mind. He carries us along by the sweet, yet powerful flow of his language; and the strength of feeling which pervades his compositions, wins for him our reverence and our love. But it is not merely as a believer in our own creed, that we rejoice in Channing. We trust we have imbibed so much of his spirit as to look beyond the precincts that bound a sect, and to feel an interest in the well-being and improvement of every son of Adam, with whom our lot has been bound up. There is a narrow spirit of sectarianism abroad in the present age, which would teach us to see all beautiful and perfect within our creed; to regard every thing that is without, as imperfect and worthless. We know that this spirit more generally prevails among those, who are pleased, in the humility of which they boast so much, to call themselves *Orthodox*; but there is something of it among our own sect, probably excited by the opposition that we have encountered. So far as it exists, it necessarily tends to fetter and cramp the mind. It sours the dispositions of our breast, and creates a feeling of dislike often growing into hatred against those who differ from us. This is manifestly a dangerous spirit:—dangerous to our own happiness;—dangerous to the gospel which we would honour and extend;—and we could not advise a more effectual means of destroying it than an intimate acquaintance with the writ-

ings of Channing. We shall there discover nothing to confine, but every thing to enlarge our charity : we shall perceive the energies of a Christian mind ardently engrossed, not in the defence of a party, but in the pursuit of truth ; not for the ascendancy of a few, but for the improvement and extension of all.

We have said that Channing is but little known in these countries. We trust that the present cheap and beautiful edition of his works, *the only complete one that has appeared*, will be the means of extending the knowledge of an author, whom we regard as the most distinguished writer on religious and political subjects that the age has produced. We have spoken but imperfectly the feelings of reverence and admiration that we entertain for him. We shall take the liberty, however, of enriching the pages of the Bible Christian with one or two extracts from the present volume, in which he will speak with infinitely greater effect for himself.

On the subject of Milton's views of christian doctrine, he thus writes.

"We are unable, within our limits, to give a sketch of Milton's strong reasoning against the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ. We must, however, pause a moment to thank God, that he has raised up this illustrious advocate of the long obscured doctrine of the divine unity. We can now bring forward the three greatest and noblest minds of modern times, and, we may add of the Christian era, as witnesses of that great truth, of which in an humbler and narrower sphere we desire to be the defenders. Our Trinitarian adversaries are perpetually ringing in our ears the names of Fathers and Reformers. We take Milton, Locke, and Newton, and place them in our front, and want no others to oppose to the whole array of great names on the opposite side. Before these intellectual suns, the stars of self-named Orthodoxy 'hide their diminished heads.' To these eminent men God communicated such unusual measures of light and mental energy, that their names spring up spontaneously, when we think or would speak of the greatness of our nature. Their theological opinions were the fruits of patient, profound, reverent study of the scriptures. They came to this work, with minds not narrowed by a technical professional education, but accustomed to broad views—to the widest range of thought. They were shackled by no party connexions. They were warped by no clerical ambition, and subdued by no clerical timidity. They came to this subject in the fullness of their strength, with free minds open to truth, and with unstained purity of life. They came to it in an age, when the doctrine of the Trinity was instilled by education, and upheld by the authority of the church, and by penal laws. And what did these great and good men, whose intellectual energy and love of truth, have made them the chief benefactors of the human mind, what, we

ask, did they discover in the scriptures?—a triple divinity?—three infinite agents?—three infinite objects of worship?—three persons, each of whom possesses his own distinct offices and yet shares equally in the Godhead with the rest? No! Scripture joined with nature, and with that secret voice in the heart, which even idolatry could not always stifle, and taught them to bow reverently before the One Infinite Father, and to ascribe to Him alone, supreme, self-existent divinity. Our principal object in these remarks, has been to show, that as far as great names are arguments, the cause of Anti-trinitarianism, or of God's proper unity is supported by the strongest. But we owe it to truth to say, that we put little trust in these fashionable proofs. The chief use of great names in religious controversy, is, to balance and neutralize one another, that the unawed and unfettered mind may think and judge with a due self-reverence, and with a solemn sense of accountableness to God alone."—p. 43.

In his treatise on the character and writings of Fénélon, who though educated in Papal prejudices, and living in the communion of the Roman Catholic faith, was one of the noblest monuments that Christendom has produced to the dignity of human nature, and the efficacy of our holy religion, we find the following beautiful passage.

"These remarks, we trust, will not be perverted. None will suspect us of Catholic partialities. Of all Protestants, we have fewest sympathies with the Romish Church. We go farther than our brethren, in rejecting her mysteries, those monuments of human weakness; and as to her claims to infallibility, we repel them with an indignation not to be understood by sects, which, calling themselves Protestant, renounce in words, but assert in practice, a Popish immunity from error, a Popish control over the faith of their brethren. To us the spiritual tyranny of Popery is as detestable as oriental despotism. When we look back on the history of Papal Rome, we see her in the days of her power, stained with the blood of martyrs; gorged with rapine; drunk with luxury and crime. But what then? Is it righteous to forget, that Time, the greatest of Reformers, has exerted his silent, purifying power on the Catholic as well as on ourselves? Shall we refuse to see, and to own with joy, that Christianity, even under Papal corruptions, puts forth a divine power? that men cannot wholly spoil it of its celestial efficacy? that, even under its most disastrous eclipse, it still sheds beams to guide the soul to heaven? that there exists in human nature, when loyal to conscience, a power to neutralize error, and to select and incorporate with itself what is pure and ennobling in the most incongruous system? Shall we shut our eyes on the fact, that among the clergy of the Romish Church, have risen up illustrious imitations of that magnanimous Apostle before whom Felix trembled; men, who, in the presence of nobles and kings, have bowed to God alone; have challenged for his law uncompromising homage, and rebuked, in virtue's own undaunted tone, triumphant guilt? Shall we shut our eyes on the fact, that from the bosom of this corrupt church, have gone forth missionaries to the east and the west, whose toils and

martyrdom will not be dimmed by comparison with what is most splendid in Protestant self-sacrifice? We repeat it, not boastingly, but from deep conviction that we are exceeded by no sect in earnestness of desire for the subversion of the usurped power of the Catholic Church, of its false doctrines, and of its childish ceremonies, so often substituted for inward virtue. We believe that these have wrought, and still work great evil. Still we see and delight to see, among those who adhere to them, the best attributes of men and Christians. Still we are accustomed to refresh our piety by books which Catholics have written. Still we find one of our highest gratifications in those works of art, in which Catholic genius has embodied its sublime and touching conceptions of the form and countenance of Jesus; has made us awed witnesses of his miracles and cross; companions of his apostles, and admirers, with a tender reverence, of the meek celestial beauty of his sainted mother. With these impressions, and this experience, we cannot but lift up our voice against Protestant as well as Papal intolerance. We would purify Protestantism from the worst stain and crime of Rome, her cruel bigotry, her nefarious spirit of exclusion."

The latter portion of the volume consists of several discourses on the Evidences of Christianity, which the illustrious author has treated in a manner worthy of his great powers. This, to us the most important part of the volume, we are compelled to reserve for review in our next number, in which we shall place before our readers a sketch of Dr. Channing's arguments for the truth of the gospel.

We cannot conclude the present notice of the work, without again expressing our admiration of the splendid and economical form in which the book has been brought out, and recording our thanks to the Messrs. Hedderwick, for their enterprising exertions to circulate a work that should be on every family book-shelf, and should be read, marked, and inwardly digested by all.

(To be continued.)

Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy. By the Rev. JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE. London, Mardon, 1835.—pp. 120. 8vo.

THE Author of this interesting work is a man well known in the literary circles, by various publications, which have attracted a good deal of the public attention. Among other writings, which have proceeded from his pen, the following have obtained so wide a circulation, that there are few or none of our readers, who have not

probably had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with some of the number:—viz. *Practical and Internal Evidence against Catholicism*:—*Doblado's Letters from Spain*:—*Observations on the Law of Irreligious Libel, &c.*:—*Second Travels of an Irish Gentleman in search of a religion*: and the *Poor Man's Preservative against the Errors of Romanism*.

The History of the author's mind, forms an instructive chapter in the volume of human nature. Born a Spaniard, and educated in the Roman Catholic religion, he was early devoted to the service of the Church; and became one of the chaplains to the king of Spain, in Seville. His prospects of promotion in the church were bright and promising; and a mind of energy and enterprise such as his, might, without presumption, have indulged the hope of rising to the highest eminence in the hierarchy and power in the state: but he had been led to entertain doubts respecting the doctrines of Catholicism: and he nobly offered all that he then possessed, and every flattering hope that lay before him, as a sacrifice on the altar of truth. He openly avowed his change of opinion and withdrew to England, where he arrived unfriended and almost unknown. He became acquainted while in that country, with the present Archbishop of Dublin, then Dr. Whately, principal of Alban Hall; and upon his Grace's elevation to the archiepiscopal see, resided in his family as his librarian. But conscience demanded another oblation. His mind inwardly revolted against the doctrines of orthodoxy; and he felt himself called on to bear his testimony in behalf of the great and fundamental truth of the Divine Unity. That he might do so without in any degree compromising the character of his friend and benefactor, he resigned his situation; and returning again to England, cast himself, once more, upon the Providence of Him who is the God of truth. The publication before us details some of the reasons by which he was induced to take this very serious and important step. In a future number we may give a more detailed outline of its contents; but in the mean time we allow the author to speak for himself in the following extract from his preface. We have taken the liberty of printing one sentence in Italics, which is not so distinguished by the writer: as we think it states a fact of great importance in his history.

“ The publication of the following Letters has been prepared by a most painful sacrifice of happiness on the part of the writer. Convinced that it is my duty publicly to dissent from some doctrines upon which the Orthodox seem to consider themselves as incapable of mistake, (else they would not treat those that deny them as guilty of something worse than an error of judgment,) I perceived the necessity and submitted to the pain of quitting the domestic society of a family, whose members showed me an affection seldom bestowed but upon a near relative, and whom I love with all the tenderness and warmth of a heart which nature has not made either cold or insensible to kindness.

“ It is not my intention to court the sympathy of the public, on the score of what I have had to endure on this occasion. I will not complain; though this is certainly the *second time* that ORTHODOXY has reduced me to the alternative of dissembling, or renouncing my best external means of happiness. But I humbly thank God, that the love of honesty and veracity which He implanted in my soul, has been strengthened, constantly and visibly, from the moment that, following its impulse, I quitted my native country. From that time to the present—a period of five-and-twenty years—every day seems to have made me more and more obedient to the principle, *not to deceive either by word or deed*. To countenance *externally* the profession of what *internally* I am convinced to be injurious to the preservation and further spread of Christ’s true Gospel, would be a conduct deserving bitter remorse and utter self-contempt.

“ It has been urged by persons whom I believe incapable of recommending dissimulation, and who have besides expressly acknowledged to me the duty of obeying conscience, that the step I had resolved to take would destroy what, in the language of partial affection, they called my former usefulness. I can easily explain to myself this suggestion, from the nature of that religious belief which, being chiefly, or in a great degree, supported by *fear* of a great sin, supposed to be attached to certain *heresies* (as they are called,) prevents even the ablest men from going through a *free* and *impartial* examination of those subjects. As if it were incredible that any reasonable man could give his assent to such theological views, my excellent and kind advisers seem to have believed me under some mental *delusion*; else they would not have urged motives which ought not to have the least weight against *conviction*.

“ Unconscious, however, as I am of any thing like delusion, but, on the contrary, enjoying the full and calm satisfaction which an evidence, long resisted by mere FEELING, is apt to produce when the mind honestly surrenders itself to its power, I feel no anxiety about consequences. I commit my past services in the cause of Truth, (whatever they may be) to the care of that Providence, which, if in fact I have been useful, must have employed me, though an humble instrument. Of *consequences* we are very incompetent judges: on *principles* alone can we depend with confidence and certainty. If the consideration of *usefulness* could be allowed in my case, SPAIN, my native country, would long, long since, have had my services. But *dissembling*, whether in deference to Transubstantiation or the Athanasian Creed, is equally hateful to me.

“ Yet, why any real good of which I may have been the occasion, should be destroyed by a fresh proof of my love of honesty and fair dealing, is what I cannot conceive. If any thing could invalidate or weaken the force of my testimony in regard to the corruptions of Popery, it would be my SILENCE in favour of what I deem other corruptions. The great *Chillingworth* would have added weight to his unrivalled works, if he had not permitted his subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles to remain in full force, when neither his judgment could approve of it, nor his natural honesty conceal his change. *As to myself, I have not enjoyed any of the temporal advantages of Orthodoxy; and it is well attested, that, at a time when I might conscientiously have taken preferment, I solemnly resolved never to accept it.* But, having subscribed to the Articles for the mere purpose of qualifying myself for the occasional performance of clerical duties, I feel bound modestly to recall that subscription before my death; and to declare that I am satisfactorily convinced, not only that the DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY is not scriptural, but also that the whole *Patristical* theology, which makes up the greatest part of the Thirty-nine Articles, consists of groundless speculations which could never have obtained currency among Christians without the aid of a false philosophy. I profess Christianity as a UNITARIAN; acknowledging ONE GOD IN ONE PERSON, and Jesus of Nazareth as my guide to *His Father and my Father, His God and my God.* &c.

“ In announcing such changes of views, it is usual to state *how* they have taken place. To describe, however, the circumstances of my case fully, would require a work much larger than the Tract which affords me the opportunity of making my sentiments known. Such an undertaking is quite beyond my present strength. How long, how earnestly, and I may add, (for who except God can know it better than myself?) how conscientiously, I have examined the whole *Patristical* theology, of which the Articles of the Church of England are a summary, will be known, *in detail*, when the SKETCH OF MY MIND IN ENGLAND may happen to see the light. Out of respect, however, to such persons as may take an interest in the subject, I will mention—(1) that my doubts of the truth of the established views began with the systematic and devout study of the Scriptures which I undertook in 1814, when, free from the literary engagements which in the service of England as well as of my native country had occupied me during the four preceding years, I removed to Oxford, for the exclusive purpose of devoting myself to theology. In the year 1818 (as it may be distinctly proved by the Journals I kept at that time, and which are still in my possession) I arrived at the Unitarian view of Christianity; but the perfect obscurity in which I was living, and the consideration that I had not then published any thing, except in Spanish, appeared to me a sufficient ground for not making a public avowal of my conviction. (2) Having, till about 1824, continued in that state, and, in spite of difficulties resulting from the notion of Orthodoxy, faithfully attached to Christianity, a revival of my early mental habits, and of those devotional sentiments which are inseparably connected with the idea of intellectual surrender to some church, induced me again to *acquiesce* in the established doctrines—not from

conviction, not by the discovery of sounder proofs than those which I had found insufficient, but chiefly by the power of that sympathy which tends to assimilation with those we love and respect. To an excess of that tendency, opposed by the unyielding temper of my understanding, I trace some of my most severe moral sufferings. Nevertheless, I have cause to rejoice, when I consider that since my present convictions have had to struggle, for many years, against that weakness of my heart,—since they have triumphed over it, not only in the most perfect absence of all acquaintance with any Unitarians, but while I was surrounded by the most devout believers in the divinity of Christ—the reasons which have moved me cannot have derived any assistance from personal affection and partiality. But to proceed: not long after my strong attachment to many Orthodox and highly religious persons had revived and given full sway to my deeply-seated habits of attachment to a church (habits which, when it is remembered that, from the age of fourteen, I belonged to the most compact and best organized body of clergy which ever existed, must be found quite natural,) my reason resumed its operations against the system which I had thus wilfully re-embraced; and my mental anxiety, growing every day more intolerable, brought on the most severe aggravation of my long and painful disease that I ever experienced before.

“I had not yet at that time settled, to my entire satisfaction, the important point which forms the subject of the following Letters. I had long been convinced, that most of the questions which so hopelessly divide the church of Christ, are not essential to Christianity. I knew that the distinction between *essential* and *non-essential* articles of faith must be arbitrary, since there is no certain rule to distinguish them. But I had not fully made the application of that fact—the absence of a rule not subject to rational doubt—nor found, as I did soon after, that the absence of every rule of dogmatic faith is in perfect conformity with the tenour and spirit of the New Testament. As I had not yet obtained this conviction, and was not indifferent about my duty to God, I could not but feel distressed, when, still under a remnant of those early impressions of identity between *saving faith* and *right opinions*, I found my Orthodoxy crumbling to dust, day by day. I may add, with perfect truth, that my distress was increased by my real attachment to the Church of England, from which I feared I should find it necessary to separate myself. Nor is it difficult to explain the source of that attachment. I may tell you, without doubt or exaggeration, that

“Abhorrence of the persecuting spirit which made me renounce my native country, is, perhaps, the most active sentiment of my heart. It was natural, therefore, that as soon as I became acquainted with the most powerful antagonist which Popery had ever met, I should cling to it with my whole heart. The Church of England was to me what I conceive the *Maltese* knights must have been to a Christian slave who had escaped from the prisons of Algiers into one of the Order's galleys. A long experience must have been necessary, both to myself and the subject of my illustration, to make us perceive that neither of our places of refuge was the dwelling of the full liberty we sought. But regarding the Church of England (as it really has been for a long period) in the character of

one of the most powerful opponents of the encroachments of Rome, my eyes were too dazzled to perceive the essential defects of her constitution and the narrowness of her toleration, till the events of the year 1829 disabused me, not without resistance and pain on my part.

"The last fact I shall state is, that in my anxiety to avoid a separation from the Church by the deliberate surrender of my mind to my old Unitarian convictions, I took refuge in a modification of the Sabellian theory, and availed myself of the *moral* Unity which I believe to exist between God the Father and Christ, joined to the consideration that Christ is called in the New Testament the *Image* of God, and addressed my prayers to God as appearing in that image. I left nothing untried to cultivate and encourage this feeling by devotional means. But such efforts of mere feeling, (and I confess with shame their frequency on my part for the sake of what seemed *most religious*) were always vain and fruitless. Sooner or later my reason has not only frustrated, but punished them. In the last-mentioned instance, the *devout* contrivance would not bear examination. Sabellianism is only Unitarianism disguised in words; and as for the worship of an *image* in its absence, the idea is most unsatisfactory. In this state, however, I passed five or six years; but the return to the clear and definite Unitarianism in which I had formerly been, was as easy as it was natural. An almost accidental (if the result had been to make me a Trinitarian, most people would call it *providential*) correspondence with a gentleman, (then personally unknown to me, and whom subsequently I have seen but once) who had some years ago resigned his preferment to profess himself a Unitarian, took place during part of last summer, and part of the ensuing winter. This was the *occasion* of my becoming aware of the flimsiness of the veil which had long somewhat concealed from me the real state of my religious belief. This flimsy veil once torn, I had no difficult theological questions to examine: they had all been settled before. Whether I was to continue apparently a member of the Establishment, was a point on which I could not hesitate a moment. For the greatest part of more than twenty years I had employed all my powers, in a manner hardly justifiable except on enthusiastic principles, with the object of continuing in the Church. My only excuse for this, must be found in the religious habits which I deeply imbibed in youth. I do not absolutely reproach myself for having so long indulged the disinterested sympathies which made me linger in connexion with the Church, when my understanding had fully rejected her principal doctrines: at all events, I derive from the fact the satisfaction of being assured, that, far from having embraced Unitarianism in haste, the only fault of which I cannot clear myself is, that of reluctance and dilatoriness to follow my conviction in its favour.

"As the long and close friendship which I have had with many distinguished members of the clergy is generally known, I must add, in justice to them all, that their influence over me has uniformly acted against the settlement of the views I profess. Without exception, all and every one of them are, to my knowledge, conscientious believers in the divinity of Christ. It might be supposed

that I had discussed with those nearest to me the subjects which so long and so fully have occupied my mind. But it is not so. It may be a fault in me, but I have always disliked *consultation* as a means of deciding questions respecting which whatever can be said for either side, is within the reach of every one. Discussion upon such points appears to me the most unlikely method of satisfying one self. Argumentative discussion on the divinity of Christ is particularly apt to allure the mind into the snares of verbal criticism concerning individual passages. That subject, on the contrary, should be settled by means of the *collective* impression conveyed by the writings of the New Testament, preceded, however, by a careful examination of the preconceived notions by which education has prepared us all to attach the orthodox meaning to certain leading words and phrases of Scripture. This is the great difficulty. We are brought up under the most deliberate *party prejudices*, sanctioned by the most awful spiritual fears. Unless, therefore, our first care is to examine their real worth, the unassisted reading of the Scriptures must mislead us. To refer a Trinitarian in doubt to the Scriptures *only*, has, indeed, a great air of candour; but if the person thus sent to that supreme but mute authority has been most assiduously taught to understand it only in one sense, and kept in perfect ignorance of all that has and may be said to prove *that* sense erroneous, his mental associations leave him no choice: it is like inviting a man to venture his all upon dice which have been previously clogged, and shaming him on the score of impartiality, from listening to those who engage to show him where the trick lies. Nevertheless, in my own case, I solemnly declare, that I employed no Unitarian works to counterbalance the prejudices of my education. I never read any defence of Unitarianism, till, in 1818, the study of the New Testament *alone*, had made me a Unitarian.

“ I trust I may still venture to add a few words respecting what I have experienced and observed since I fairly and honestly began to act in full conformity with my conviction. Having never before been in any dissenting place of worship whatever, and conceiving from what I had heard that the absence of a regular Liturgy in all, and that of real devotion in those of Unitarians, made them quite offensive to persons accustomed to the Church service, I strongly feared I should be obliged to follow Milton's example, and abstain from public worship. Wishing, however, to satisfy myself by personal observation, I went, soon after my arrival in this town of Liverpool, to one of the Unitarian chapels. The effect which the service produced upon me was recorded in my private journal as soon as I returned to my lodgings; but the passage is too long to be inserted here. Suffice it to declare, as I do in the most solemn manner, that I never enjoyed a more devout and sublime impression than I received there. My almost constantly repeated attendance has not weakened the effect of the truly sublime Unitarian worship with which I have become acquainted. I have since attended divine worship in another chapel of the same denomination; and the original impression has been confirmed. Sunday, which owing to the constant struggle of my mind at church, and the frequent internal rejection of passages in the Liturgy, was formerly to me a day of pain and suffering, is now one of enjoyment.

The admirable combination of beautiful hymns, with prayers no less beautiful, and a sermon, in which I have hitherto never failed to find instruction and support to my religious feelings, all contribute to make me enjoy the service of the Lord's Day. I must add, that I have never joined congregations in which attention and devotion were more visible in all, including the numerous charity children who attend the service. It is a great misfortune that the spirit of Orthodoxy stands like "a great gulph fixed" between Churchmen and Unitarians. Could impartial good men "come and see," though they might remain attached to their opinions, they would be certainly delivered from a multitude of most uncharitable prejudices.

"I conclude by protesting against the supposition, that the following little work is intended as a defence of Unitarianism. In it I certainly make use of my Unitarian views for argument and illustration; but I do that incidentally, and almost exclusively, in the last Letter. Unitarianism is not in want of any new defence; nor would I waste my time in entering upon a question through which every one may find his way, provided he chooses to examine candidly what is already within the reach of every one: I shall not, therefore, consider myself bound to answer any Anti-unitarian observations which may be directed against me. I do not fear that my declining a controversy, for which my constant ill health particularly unfits me, may injure the cause of Unitarianism. I beg leave to refer any champion of Orthodoxy, who may be inclined to stand in defence of the Athanasian doctrine, to try what he can do against the works already in existence. I particularly refer controversial divines to "A VINDICATION OF UNITARIANISM, and SEQUEL," by the Rev. James Yates; and to the recent work of Professor Norton, of Cambridge, U. S., entitled "A STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR NOT BELIEVING THE DOCTRINES OF TRINITARIANS CONCERNING THE NATURE OF GOD AND THE PERSON OF CHRIST." J. B. W.

Liverpool, June 20, 1835.

Intelligence.

ASSOCIATION OF NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS.

At a Joint Meeting of the Synod of Munster, Presbytery of Antrim, and Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, held in Strand-street House of Worship, Dublin, on Wednesday, July 29, 1835; present,

SYNOD OF MUNSTER.

Ministers.	Elders.
Rev. Joseph Hutton,	Joseph Hone.
— David Trotter,	
— John Pinkerton,	
— James Armstrong, D. D.	} Robert Hutton.
— Wm. Hamilton Drummond, D. D.	
— William Hunter,	
— Robert Ferris,	
— William M'Cance,	
— J. C. Ledlie, D. D.	
— James Orr,	
— John Neilson.	

PRESBYTERY OF ANTRIM.

Ministers.	Elders.
Rev. W. Bruce,	
— S. C. Nelson,	John Rowan.
— David Watson,	James Murland.
— Classon Porter.	
— C. J. M'Alister.	

REMONSTRANT SYNOD OF ULSTER.

Ministers.	Elders.
Rev. Nathaniel Alexander,	
— John Mitchell,	W. Handcock.
— James Davis,	J. Mulligan.
— James Lunn,	
— Henry Montgomery, L. L. D.	
— Fletcher Blakely,	David Orr.
— William Porter,	
— David Whyte,	John Stitt.
— Robert Campbell,	
— James Watson,	
— George Hill	
— W. H. Doherty,	
— William Crozier,	James Bingham.

1. It was moved by the Rev. James Armstrong, D. D., and seconded by the Rev. William Porter, that the Rev. Joseph Hutton do take the chair as President of this Meeting.

2. It was moved by the Rev. Fletcher Blakely, and seconded by the Rev. Dr. Drummond, that the Rev. Dr. Armstrong be requested to act as Secretary to this Meeting.

3. It was moved by the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, seconded by the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, and unanimously resolved, that, whereas, the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, are perfectly unanimous in acknowledging allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ alone, as the King and Head of the Church; and in the maintenance of the great principles of the Reformation;—viz, the Sufficiency of the Scripture, the Right of Private Judgement, and the Rejection of human authority in matters of faith; they do agree to unite under the denomination of "The Association of Irish Non-subscribing Presbyterians," for the purposes hereinafter mentioned:—

4. Moved by the Rev. Fletcher Blakely, seconded by the Rev. D. Trotter, and resolved unanimously,—that, as there are several knots of individuals, in different parts of Ireland, particularly in the province of Ulster, who concur with us in holding the above mentioned principles, and as facilities are thus presented for the establishment of regular worshipping societies, the members of this Association do hereby declare, that they will, collectively and separately, use their utmost endeavours to afford those knots of individuals such religious instruction as may ultimately rear them into settled and permanent congregations,

5. Moved by the Rev. Dr. Drummond, seconded by the Rev. James Davis, and resolved unanimously, That in order to carry into effect the above Resolution, two Committees be formed, one in Dublin,

and the other in Belfast; the Dublin Committee to consist of the Rev. Joseph Hutton, the Rev Dr. Armstrong, the Rev. Dr. Drummond, and the Rev. Dr. Ledlie; and the Belfast Committee to consist of the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, the Rev. Fletcher Blakely, the Rev. W. Glendy, the Rev. J. Scott Porter, the Rev. John Porter, the Rev. Classon Porter, the Rev. C. J. M'Alister, and the Rev. W. H. Doherty.

6. It was moved by the Rev. William Porter, seconded by the Rev. Dr. Ledlie, and resolved unanimously, that a joint Committee for College Entrance Examination be appointed, in order to ascertain the competency of Candidates for the Ministry before they go to College for the first time; and that no Student shall be recognized as commencing his Collegiate Studies under the sanction of any of our Bodies, who shall not have previously obtained a certificate of competency from the Moderator of said Committee.—This Committee, together with the course of preparatory study to be hereafter determined.

7. Moved by Rev. William Bruce, seconded by Rev. Robert Campbell, and resolved unanimously, that should any student on presenting himself to a Presbytery, connected with this association, be found to have neglected the preparatory branches of education; or to be insufficiently prepared in the same; he shall be sent back to the Entrance Examination Committee, and shall not be received by the Presbytery until he shall have procured from the Moderator of said Committee, a certificate of due qualification.

8. Moved by Rev. Nathaniel Alexander, seconded by Rev. Robert Ferris, and resolved unanimously, that an application be made to the Trustees of "the Fund for the protection of the rights of Conscience," to appropriate an annual sum for the support of a Professional Instructor of the Students for the Ministry amongst us, in such branches of Education as are immediately connected with their preparation for the pastoral office.

The communication from the venerable company of Pastors at Geneva, which appeared in a late number of the Bible Christian, having been read by the Secretary of the Association:—

9. *Resolved unanimously*,—that a Deputation be appointed to repair to Geneva, for the purpose of assisting at the celebration of the approaching Religious Festival in that place; and that said Deputation consist of the following gentlemen—the Rev. James Armstrong, D. D., and the Rev. John Pinkerton, M. A., *Ministers*—with John Jameson, Esq., Captain John Wallace, John Armstrong, B. A., Surgeon Henry Kennedy, B. A., and George Allman Armstrong, B. A. *Lay Elders*.

10. *Resolved unanimously*,—that the following letter be signed by our President, and by the respective Moderators of our three constituent Bodies; and then transmitted, through the Deputation, to our respected Brethren of Geneva.

Dublin, July 29th, 1835.

To the Venerable Company of Pastors in Geneva.

Respected Brethren in Christ,

We the members of the three Presbyterian Bodies in Ireland, the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remon-

strant Synod of Ulster, take the opportunity of this our first united meeting in Dublin, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 51st December, 1834, as well as of the letters subsequently written.

We deeply sympathise in your joy on the recurrence of the festival which commemorates an event, one of the most illustrious, and most pregnant with blessings to the human race, that has ever been recorded in the annals of mankind. We contemplate with unfeigned satisfaction, the approach of that period when the great principles of the Reformation shall be carried to their full and legitimate extent; when the sufficiency of Scripture, and the right of Individual Judgment shall be universally admitted.

These principles alone can put an end to all persecutions for conscience sake; and they will naturally bring in their train liberty and peace, and the true glory of God by the diffusion of that benevolence which is the peculiar characteristic of the gospel of Jesus.

We shall not fail on the 23d of August, to recommend the divine grace and blessing the interests of the Reformed Church of Geneva; and we cordially unite our prayers with yours, that the God of light and love, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will send forth his spirit into every region of the earth,—will enlighten and bless mankind with a knowledge of the truth, and lead them to the practice of pure and vital religion.

We commend to your friendly attentions, and to the blessings of divine grace our beloved brethren in Christ Jesus, the Rev. Pastors J. Armstrong, D. D., and John Pinkerton, M. A., together with, Messrs. John Jamieson, John Wallace, John Armstrong, Henry Kennedy, and George Allman Armstrong, who have been deputed by us to be the bearers of this Epistle, and to assist at the approaching commemoration.

Your affectionate brethren in Christ Jesus,
JOSEPH HUTTON, M. A. T. C. D., President of the United Meeting;
J. C. LEDLIE, D. D. Moderator of Synod of Munster;
S. C. NELSON, A. M. Moderator of Presbytery of Antrim;
DAVID WHYTE, A. M. Moderator of the Remonstrant Synod.

11. It was unanimously agreed, that, in case of any emergency, the Clerks of the three united Bodies shall have the power of convening a *pro re nata* meeting of the Association in Dublin.

12. It was moved by Rev. W. Bruce, seconded by Rev. Robert Ferris, and unanimously resolved, that nothing in the above Resolutions, or in the union of the three Bodies to carry those Resolutions into effect, shall be considered as in the slightest degree interfering with the independence, name, or separate jurisdiction of the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, or the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.

13. *Resolved unanimously*,—that the following Address to His Excellency, the Lord Lieutenant, by a Deputation from our three Associated Bodies.—* * As this address, and His Excellency's most gracious answer appeared in the last number of the Bible Christian, it is deemed unnecessary to re-insert them here.

14. It was unanimously agreed, that the next Triennial Meeting of the Association of Irish Presbyterians, shall be held in Belfast, on the second Wednesday in August, 1838.

JOSEPH HUTTON, PRESIDENT.

JAMES ARMSTRONG, D. D. SECRETARY.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. IX.

OCTOBER, 1835.

VOL. VI.

INTRODUCTION OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER I. I—16.

THE following interpretation of this important and perplexing portion of Scripture is submitted to the calm consideration of the candid and intelligent reader.

According to the concurrent testimony of antiquity, John composed his Gospel as a supplement to the preceding evangelists. This conclusion indeed, may be drawn from the variety of new matter which he has introduced, and the important events which he has omitted, particularly the institution of the Lord's supper. Matthew and Luke had begun their narratives with the birth of Jesus, and Mark with the preaching of the Baptist. John commences his at a time prior to the creation of the world, introducing it with the words of Moses, "In the beginning." His preface comprehends four periods: first, the time antecedent to creation; second, from the creation to the giving of the law; third, between the giving of the law and the preaching of John the Baptist; the fourth extends to the entrance of Jesus on his public ministry.

I. John informs us that, "in the beginning," before the commencement of our time, there existed a being, afterwards denominated "the Word,"^(a) as being the instrument by whom God made known his will to men; who abode with God, and partook of a divine nature^(b) (1). His abode with God, he again assures us, was not of recent origin, but existed from the beginning (2).

II. He was the instrument^(c) of God in framing this earth. "All things were made^(d) by him." This he repeats more emphatically in the following words: "and without him was not any thing^(e) made that was made." This assertion he repeats a third time in ver. 10. (3). He was the fountain of animal life, and intellectual light to mankind (4). This light shone from the creation of man, but the minds of men were so darkened, that they could not perceive it. It could not penetrate the darkness (5).

III. He exercised particular care over the nation of the Jews, whom he selected as his peculiar people; ^(f) but they were disobedient and refractory (11). To those, however, who received him, he gave power to become the sons of God (12); not on account of their being the descendants of Abraham, nor their observance of any ceremonial institutions, but on account of their obedience to the divine will (13).

IV. Before his public appearance in this world, "there was a man sent from God, whose name was John," (6), to announce his approach, and bear witness to his nature and office (7), that he was "the true light, (see ver. 5) which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (9); and that, though our Lord came after him into the world, he had existed before him, ^(g) and was superior to him (15). He had been spiritually present in the world from its formation by him, ^(h) but mankind were ignorant of his presence and influence (10).

He, at length, "became flesh," appeared in a human form, "in fashion as a man," ⁽ⁱ⁾ and dwelt among men full of grace and truth; and of this fulness all his followers received a portion. For their more perfect satisfaction, as to his superior nature, he admitted Peter, James, and John himself to witness his transfiguration, ^(j) when he appeared in glory—a glory becoming "the only begotten of the Father" (14. 16).

NOTES.

(a) See 1 John, i. 1.

(b) The word *God* cannot be understood in the same sense in both clauses.

(c) Heb. i. 2. "By whom also he made the worlds."

(d) For this meaning of *γενεσσο*, see Gen. i. 3, in the Septuagint. James, iii. 9; Heb. xi. 3—iv. 3.

(e) *Οὐδὲ ἓν*, not one thing.

(f) The Greek word for *his own* (*τα ἰδία*) in the first clause, is in the neuter plural; but in the second clause, it is (*οἱ ἰδίοι*) in the masculine plural. By the first is commonly understood *Judea*.

(g) "He was before me," (*ἐμπροσθεν μου γεγεννην*), intimates that he existed before he entered this world, for in no other sense could Jesus have been before John, since John was born before *him*.

(h) *Κοσμος* not *καινος*, as in Heb. i. 2. *Tota hujus universi machina*, Matt. xiii. 35—xxiv. 21; John, i. 10.—*Terra, orbis terrarum*, John, i. 9.—*Schleusner*.

(i) See Philip, ii. 7, 8.

(j) See Luke, ix. 28, 32; 2 Pet. i. 17, 18. "This voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount," Matt. xvii. 5; Mark, ix. 7.

N. B. The transpositions in these verses are such, as improve the order without affecting the sense; and as are admitted here and elsewhere by the best critics.

NEMO.

MORNING.

'Tis morning's hour, the glorious sun,
His path of light hath just begun ;
How softly breathes the balmy air,
And all invites the Christian's prayer.

The gloomy clouds that veiled the world,
Back from the fields of earth are furled,
And sprinkled o'er with glist'ning dews,
The flowers reflect a thousand hues.

The warbling songsters of the grove,
Now hymn their Great Creator's love,
And sweetly tune their artless lay,
To thank him for another day.

The little bee hath left its home,
From flower to flower for sweets to roam,
And upwards springing on its wings,
The early lark its matin sings.

Delightful hour ! that soothes the mind,
When leaving earthly thoughts behind,
Our spirit soars beyond the sky,
Or holds with nature converse high.

There's in the morn an influence sweet,
Like what is felt when Christians meet,
With grateful hearts before the throne,
Of nature's God, his love to own.

The Christian needs no tinkling bell,
Theatric pomp, or organ's swell,
To call him to his daily prayer,
He knows his Lord is every where.

Let fashion seek the stately pile,
Where music may her hours beguile ;
There hired voices give that praise,
Which thankful hearts alone should raise.

Yet what avails the bended form,
If in the heart the fiendish storm
Of passions fierce, that shun display,
Still chains the soul beneath its sway ?

Father of light, of truth, of love,
Give us thy spirit from above ;
And while we here thy bounties share,
Oh move our hearts to fervent prayer.

And when death's night shall close our day,
For men and worlds alike decay ;
Grant, Father, grant, our souls to be,
With thee throughout eternity !

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 369.)

CHAPTER XXVIII.

V. 1. In the end of the Sabbath.

Sabbath [Saturday] being over, and the first day of the week [Sunday] beginning to dawn, &c.

V. 10. Go tell my brethren that they go [to go] into Galilee.

V. 14. We will persuade him, and secure you.

We will appease his resentment, and exculpate you.

V. 17. But some doubted.

Some of the company doubted. There is no room to think that this refers to some of the Apostles, when Christ had so lately satisfied Thomas, the most incredulous among them.

This admission is one instance among many of the candour of the Evangelist.

V. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach [convert, or Gr. make disciples of,] all nations, baptizing them in the name of, &c.

“Baptizing them” into a belief, acknowledgment, profession of, &c. The more exact translation is *into*.—*Newcome*.

This form of baptism was a profession of that holy religion, which originated with the Father, was taught by Christ the Son, and confirmed by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.—*Improved Version*.

It does not appear that any of the apostles were baptized. None of them observed this form in the Acts, or make mention of it in the Epistles.

The primitive Greek word from which baptize is formed, signifies, *to dip, to immerse; to dye or stain any thing by immersion*. The Greek derivative word translated baptize, signifies, *to dip, immerse, or plunge into water; to wash or cleanse one's self with water, (in p. or mid. form); to baptize, to administer the right of baptism; in the pass, to receive baptism; to bestow copiously, (applied to the giving of the Holy Ghost, which is styled a baptism;) to be baptized, i. e. plunged in a flood of afflictions*. Schleus. and Parkhurst.—*Dr. Hinck's Lexicon*.

All agree that baptism was administered by the application of water; but differ about the manner in which it was and should be applied. This may be collected from the several texts, in which the practice is mentioned, as they occur.

V. 20. I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

With you, and with my church; interceding for you, governing, and preserving you to the conclusion of the dispensation introduced by me.—*Newcome*.

“Unto the end of the world:” to the end of the age, i. e. to the end of the Jewish dispensation; till the destruction of Jerusa-

tem and the temple : soon after which miraculous powers were withdrawn, and no personal appearances of Christ are recorded.—*Improved Version*.

“Amen,” that is, so may it indeed be. The word “Amen” with which each of the Gospels ends, seems to have been intended as an intimation of the conclusion of the book, and an asseveration of the things contained in it.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.

THE word translated GOSPEL has different meanings in the New Testament. Its original meaning is *good news*, or *glad tidings*. Hence it came to signify the Christian Dispensation. In the titles of the four Gospels it denotes, the history of the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of the Son of God ; as also in the first verse of this Evangelist. The titles of the Sacred books, however, are no parts of Scripture, but were prefixed by some of the first transcribers. Another sense of the word is, the ministry of the Gospel, Rom. i. 9 ; 1 Cor. ix. 18 ; 2 Cor. viii. 18 ; and Phil. iv. 15. Lastly, it sometimes signifies some particular doctrine or promise, Gal. ii. 2, 7. Thus Paul denominates the calling of the Gentiles *his Gospel*, and speaks of *my Gospel*, Rom. ii. 16—xvi. 25.

MARK. *Saint* is omitted by Griesbach in the titles of all the Evangelists. This is the same Mark whose name occurs so often in the Acts, and in the Epistles. His Jewish name was John, to which Mark or Marcus was a Roman addition ; and his mother's name was Mary. (Acts, xii. 12.) Barnabas was his uncle. (Colos. iv. 10.) He appears to have been converted by Peter ; (1 Pet. v. 13.) and when Paul and Barnabas travelled together he was their companion. (Acts, xii. 25—xiii. 15.) When a dispute arose between them on his account, which caused a temporary separation, (Acts, xv. 36, 40,) Mark accompanied his uncle Barnabas, and Silas attended Paul. Paul, however, was afterwards reconciled to Mark, and recommended him to others. (Col. iv. 10 ; 2 Tim. iv. 11 ; Philemon, 24.)

This Gospel was first published at Rome, about the year of Christ, 62 or 63 ; the 9th or 10th of Nero.

Mark sometimes transcribes the very expressions used by Matthew, which has led some to imagine, that his Gospel was little more than an abridgment of Matthew's. But there are several circumstances mentioned by Mark, which are not found in any of the other gospels, (see ch. viii. 22—26 :) nor has he always followed the same arrangement of events with his predecessor.

So far as Mark drew his materials from Matthew, we have his testimony to their truth, while his variations, additions, and omissions, evince that he followed his own judgment and information ; and as we have reason to believe that he communicated all to Peter, we may presume upon his testimony to the truth of both. We might perhaps conclude that they were the suggestions of Peter himself. In confirmation of this, it has been observed, that while Mark passes over some incidents that were creditable to Peter, he enlarges more than the other evangelists on the failings and errors of that magna-

nimous apostle. Agreeably to these remarks, Mark's gospel was denominated by many of the ancients, the gospel according to St. Peter.

For the explanation of corresponding passages the reader will be referred to the Notes on Matthew. For minor points he may consult the parallel texts usually inserted in the larger copies of the Bible.

CHAPTER I.

V. 2. See Brief Notes on Matthew, chap. iii.

V. 12. And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

See Brief Notes on Matt. iv.

"Driveth him;" sendeth him forth. The original word does not imply violence.—*Newcome*.

Those who consider the temptation as a divine vision, understand the first scene as a warning, to depend entirely upon providence for the supply of his wants; the second, as a caution against ambition and vain-glory; the third, as an admonition against an unnecessary display of his miraculous powers.

V. 24. Let us alone; what have to do with thee? &c.

There was a tradition that when the Messiah came, the Galileans would be driven from their country, and doomed to wander. To this tradition the demoniac may refer. Accordingly Dr. Lightfoot remarks, that when this demoniac asked Jesus, "Art thou come to destroy *us*?" he meant not "the devils" but "the Galileans."

He may have learned the character of Jesus during his lucid intervals.

V. 30. See Brief Notes on Matt. viii.

V. 32. And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, &c.

They acted thus to avoid what they esteemed a profanation of the Sabbath; which began and ended at sunset.

CHAPTER II.

V. 3. Bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four [carried on a couch or mattress by four.]

V. 4. They uncovered the roof where he was, &c.

They went up the outer stairs of the house to the flat roof, forced open the privy-door or trap-door, which led to the top of the house, by the inner stairs; and, by means of cords, let down the paralytic on his couch before Jesus; or, as some think, carried him down the inner stairs. See Luke, v. 19.

V. 8. See Brief Notes on Matt. ix.

V. 14. He saw Levi the son of Alpheus sitting at the receipt of custom, &c.

"Levi" was another name for Matthew, the apostle and evangelist.

“The Receipt of Custom.” This should be rendered, as in the marginal reading, “the place where the custom was received,” the custom-house.

V. 15. Many publicans and sinners, &c.

The revenues of the empire were farmed or customed by the Roman Knights, who appointed collectors or receivers at the different ports or stations. Matthew, otherwise Levi, was a collector at the port of Capernaum.

These publicans or tax-gatherers, were considered by the Jews as the most infamous class of the people; because they were either Heathens appointed by the Romans to tyrannize over the nation, or renegade and apostate Jews who impiously assisted in the oppression of God's people.

“Publicans and sinners” may either be used as synonymous, or may denote two different classes of people in the company. If synonymous, Matthew styles both himself and his brethren “Sinners,” Matt. ix. 10, 11.

V. 17. They that are whole have no need of the physician, &c.

Men who love truth and do righteousness, and sincerely fear God, however they may be encompassed with many infirmities, are styled, in Scripture, just and righteous.

Perhaps these words may have been spoken ironically, as if he had said, you that are so eminently righteous as to despise all others have no need of any instruction, and should excuse me if I bestow my attention on these poor miserable sinners.

V. 19. Can the children of the Bridegroom, &c.

See Brief Notes on Matt. ix.

V. 21. New cloth.

Literally, cloth not cleansed—in a harsh, stiff, and unfinished state.

V. 23. They went through the corn-fields on the Sabbath day, &c.

See Brief Notes on Matt. xii.

From the Jewish Rabbis we learn, that this was a breach of two of their precepts. One of them prohibits all kind of food before the prayers of the synagogue; and the other expressly informs us, that to pluck the ears of corn was deemed as complete a violation of the Sabbath as reaping or any other rural labour. Offenders were stoned to death.

Our Saviour himself avoided giving unnecessary offence, and defended his disciples on the example of David, who acted from necessity, and of the priests in the discharge of their official duties.

On his return to the synagogue, in the case of the man with the withered hand, he superadded the works of necessity and duty, the superior obligation of charity, and even humanity to a beast.

V. 26. In the days of Abiathar the high priest, &c.

It was Ahimelech, the father of Abiathar, who gave David the hallowed bread, 1 Sam. xxi. 3—6. Abiathar, indeed, succeeded

his father in the sacred office, and was perhaps present during the transaction here referred to, and may have acted as his deputy. Griesbach suspects this clause to be spurious.

V. 27. 28. The Sabbath was made for man, &c.

That is, it was graciously ordained by God for man's comfort, rest from labour, and instruction in righteousness and true holiness. He may, therefore, (ver. 28.) be said, in this sense, to be lord or master of the Sabbath; or, the Son of Man may signify the Messiah, who has power to regulate the Sabbath. Matt. xii. 8.

CHAPTER III.

V. 10. As many as had plagues.

"Plagues," Greek, *scourges*, may probably signify some of the most grievous distempers, such as leprosies, palsies, inveterate fluxes, &c.

V. 17. Boanerges, [Heb.] which is, The sons of thunder.

Powerful and resolute propagators of the gospel.

V. 21. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him; for they said, he is beside himself.

"Friends;" persons about him, or his relations.

"They went out," from the house. (ver. 19.)

"To lay hold on him:" to restrain him and to persuade him to take repose and refreshment.

"He is beside himself:" he is too intent on his ministry. He is transported too far. Greek, he is in an extacy.

The passage is thus paraphrased by Dr. Macknight. They that were with him, (in the house, v. 19.) hearing (the noise made at the door,) went out to restrain or quell, (not Jesus, for he was in the house, v. 19. but) the multitude, or mob, (either by dispersing them, or keeping them out;) for they said: The multitude, or mob, is mad. The word translated "to restrain" has this meaning in Rev. vii. 1.

V. 22. He hath Beelzebub, &c.

See Brief Notes Matt. ix. 12.

V. 29. Is in danger of eternal damnation, [Gr. Judgment.]

This is said because they said (v. 22.) he had an unclean spirit.

V. 33. Who is my mother and my brethren.

Doddridge thinks that, by these words, he only expresses his affection to his obedient disciples in a peculiarly endearing manner.

It corresponds with those texts in which he says, that "those who love father or mother more than him are not worthy of him; and also with the following verse.

CHAPTER IV.

V. 2. And said unto them in his doctrine.

That is, in the course of his teaching.

V. 3. Behold, there went out a sower to sow, &c.

See Brief Notes. Matt. xiii.

V. 11. But unto them that are without.

Those who are strangers to my doctrine.

V. 12. That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand.

They overlook what they see, and are inattentive to what they hear. These phrases express the result, and not the intention of the teacher.

The difference between Jesus and Isaiah, (vi. 9. 10.) is, that the latter says, "make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes." Between these expressions and our Lord's, the difference in the original is very small. Pharaoh's hardening his own heart, and God's hardening Pharaoh's heart signify the same thing; as appears by these phrases being used promiscuously by Moses.

V. 21. Is a candle brought, &c.

See Brief Notes. Matt. v. 15.

The connection is: I have explained to you the parable of the sower. My doctrine may be compared to a lamp set on a stand. Every part of it is designed to be made known.

V. 24. See Brief Notes, Matt. vii.

V. 26. So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed in his ground, &c.

In this parable we are informed, that as the husbandman does not, by any efficacy of his own, cause the seed to grow, but leaves it to be nourished by the soil and the sun; so Christ and his apostles, having taught men the true religion, were to suffer it to spread by the secret influences of the Holy Spirit, till at length it should attain its full effect. Further, as the husbandman cannot perceive the corn in his fields extending its dimensions; So the ministers of Christ were not at first enabled to see the gospel making a quick progress.—*Fawkes.*

It also intimates that, notwithstanding the supineness and indolence of ministers, the gospel will be continually gaining ground. Whether they wake or sleep, it will be insensibly advancing till ripe for the sickle.

V. 31. It is like a grain of mustard seed, &c.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xiii.

A Spanish historian says, that in the Province of Chili, in South America, the mustard grows to the size of a tree, and the birds lodge under the shade, and build their nests in its branches.—*Paxton's Illustrations.*

The botanical name of this plant is *Sinapi Erucoides*.

V. 38. Master [teacher.]

In the New Testament the same word is translated *lord* and *master*. *Lord* does not intimate hereditary rank, or superior office : it only expresses regret, and may be addressed to an equal, and often corresponds with *Sir* in English. *Master* is often used to express *teacher*, as in this text. There is an ambiguity in the use of the word *master* when the context does not point out what kind of master is meant. Matt. x. 24, should have been translated, "The disciple is not above his teacher, nor the servant above his master." James iii. 1. should have been translated, "Be not many teachers," &c. The appellation of *Lord*, given to our Saviour throughout the gospels, is always to be understood as an ordinary mark of respect; being often given to him in the original by persons who knew nothing about him; as by the Samaritan woman, John iv. 11; and by the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, John v. 7; though there our translators have rendered it not *Lord* but *Sir*. In this sense the word *Lord* is also applied to Christ by the leper, Matt. viii. 2; by the centurion, Matt. viii. 6; and by the Canaanitish woman, Matt. xv. 22.

The word usually translated *Teacher* is nearly equivalent to *Rabbi*, and may be expressed by *Doctor*. See Campbell's Preliminary Dissertation, vol. I. p. 366, 367.

THE INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE CONDITION OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

THE subject of this Essay cannot but be highly interesting to every man who has a sincere desire to promote the happiness of his species. It affords a rich variety of materials for the speculations of the philosopher, and the labours of the philanthropist. For if on inquiry it be found, that knowledge has a tendency to meliorate the condition of the labouring classes of society,—a motive will be produced, stimulating every benevolent person to bring into action all the means within his power, of extending the boundaries of science and art, of polite literature, and rational religion.

Of all the features which distinguish the present age above former times, there is none, we conceive, that better characterizes it, than the growing conviction in the minds of the community, that knowledge is calculated to render the poorer members comfortable, virtuous, and happy. The truth of this opinion we deem to be incontrovertible; but, like many others expressed in general terms, the sentiment admits of being modified, or at least particularly explained.

It cannot be doubted, that some of man's greatest anxieties and most acute sufferings proceed from a highly

refined and cultivated intellect. He whose taste has been formed to the utmost degree of sensibility—who has delighted to roam in the fairy fields of beauty, of love, and of imagination—who has culled the sweetest flowers of poesy and romance—is but ill calculated to labour in the dreary drudgery of life—to mix in scenes totally repugnant to those sensitive feelings which have been generated by his native genius, or implanted by his acquired information. The persons with whom such a one is too frequently obliged to associate, are rude and vulgar—possessing minds which partake more of the mould of earth than of the spirit of heaven—allied more to the coarse implements of manual labour, than to the polished materials of intellectual culture; and whose language, manners, and morals, are equally opposed to correct taste and sound morality. The poor man, then, who possesses either genius or learning, must be subject to a great deal of mental distress, when necessarily engaged in intercourse with his uncouth and ignorant fellow-workmen.

If, instead of enriching his mind with the varied treasures of literature, the poor man prefer the more solid advantages of science—if, instead of being enraptured with the sublime strains of Homer and Milton, he search with Locke into the depths of the human mind, or ascend with Newton to the planets and the stars,—the profundity of his genius, and the teachings of his philosophy, will alike unfit him for the monotonous labour of a workshop, and for the proud and conceited opinions of unenlightened men.

If not satisfied with gathering a few precious flowers from the garden of literature—if, in place of penetrating into the arcana of the human intellect, or of winging his flight to the farthest boundaries of the starry heavens, the poor man enlighten his mind by an acquaintance with the attributes and the dispensations of the Deity, as manifested in the great book of nature, and revealed in the grander volume of revelation,—if he enrich his soul with the noble principles of virtue and piety; a virtue comprehending the universe within its benevolent grasp, and a piety clinging with the most devoted attachment to the impartial Father of all; such knowledge—such philanthropy—and such devotion must increase the griefs and woes of his sympathetic heart, when he is associated with the very lowest of his species, and surrounded on all sides by ignorance, folly, and vice.

It would be no difficult matter to point out in detail many of the distresses to which individuals belonging to the operative classes are subject from the possession of knowledge. But we conceive it unnecessary to add any thing further on this branch of the subject. For no one will hesitate in admitting, that the poor man, of a highly cultivated mind, will undergo much mental suffering when he mixes in the daily walks of life, as he will unavoidably do, with persons whose souls are debased by ignorance and vice. But the mere admission of this fact implies, that the unhappiness of his condition in life arises not so much from his own intellectual superiority, as from the moral degradation of his associates, occasioned either by their extreme ignorance, or by an abuse of the noble powers of their nature. From our strong conviction of the benign tendency of knowledge, we fear not to affirm, that were it more widely diffused amongst the working portions of the community,—were the tastes of the operatives refined and their judgments strengthened by reading and reflection,—they would, as a necessary consequence, feel an aversion to the low ribaldry and sensual conduct to which they had been addicted, and they would rejoice in the exertion of those faculties which so highly distinguish man above the brute creation.

Ignorant persons seem to be happy; but, whatever share of happiness they possess, it is without doubt considerably exaggerated in the assertions of those who boast of the blessings of ignorance. If vacancy of mind, however, and want of feeling, constitute happiness, it may be justly said that they possess it. But it is a gross abuse of terms to pronounce the ignorant happy. Such happiness must be negative, for the plain reason, that it is produced by want of thought and feeling. But negative happiness is no happiness at all. Further, it is obvious that the powers of the mind were bestowed on man in order to be exerted; and that without exertion, they could not answer the purposes for which they were intended. How can we suppose, that the individual who acts in conformity to his nature, has fewer sources of enjoyment than he whose understanding is put on an equality with brute instinct? Is it probable that the Deity, who is intelligence as well as love, would impart to his rational offspring those powers of the soul, which, when called into operation, would render their possessors miserable? It is impossible.

It is rather unfortunate for the lower orders in society, that their means of improvement are necessarily limited. But in an age such as the present, when cheap periodical publications, circulating libraries, mechanics' institutes, and literary and philosophical societies, are within the reach of the poor as well as of the rich, the former have considerable opportunities for cultivating and exercising the powers of their understandings. Man is formed for action ; and if not engaged at his moments of leisure in pursuits of an intellectual kind, he will have to indulge his sensual appetites, or employ his wandering thoughts in low and unworthy objects. He will either proceed in the path of knowledge, or he will retrograde. He will either add to his stock of information, or diminish what he has already acquired. And the consequence naturally follows, that not only will his intellectual energies become enfeebled from want of proper exercise, but his moral perceptions will lose that acuteness and sensibility which are indispensably requisite for the due regulation of his thoughts and conduct.

Although a large proportion of the poor man's time is devoted merely to procure the means of bodily subsistence, yet it is very pleasing to consider, that, if he have a desire for obtaining knowledge, his leisure moments, few and transient as they may be, will not be occupied in frivolous pursuits, or in revels and debaucheries which have a tendency to impair his health, sink his dignity as a man, and ruin the physical and moral interests of his relatives. At the close of his daily toil, he may improve his mind either by an attendance on the prelections of the philosopher, by meeting with a select few to discover and communicate truth, or by retiring to his humble study in order to converse with the illustrious and eloquent dead. He may behold with admiration the lofty flights of fiction, or the stupendous wonders of science. He may be animated with the fine imaginings of poets, or enlightened by the heavenly instructions of sages. He may, in short, become acquainted with the best, the wisest, and most exalted of his species ; and he may partake of those treasures of genius, of wisdom, and of learning, which they have left as an inheritance for the benefit of mankind.

The following lines from the *Minstrel* are so beautifully descriptive of the benign influence of knowledge,

that we cannot refrain from introducing them here. They are not, indeed, applied by the philosophic Bard to the poor man's condition; but some of his sentiments will be found peculiarly appropriate to our subject.

Philosophy appears. The gloomy race,
By Indolence and moping Fancy bred,
Fear, Discontent, Solicitude, give place;
And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead;
While o'er the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.
Then waken from long lethargy to life
The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought;
Then jarring appetites forego their strife—
A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.
Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
With fell revenge, lust that defies control,
With gluttony and death. *The mind untaught
Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl;*
As PHŒBUS TO THE WORLD, IS SCIENCE TO THE SOUL.
What dire necessities on every hand
Our art, our strength, our fortitude require!
Of foes intestine what a numerous band
Against this little throb of life conspire!
Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
A while, and turn aside death's levell'd dart,
Soothe the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart,
And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.
Nor less to regulate man's moral frame
Science exerts her all-composing sway:
Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,
Or pines to Indolence and Spleen a prey,
Or Avarice, a fiend more fierce than they?—
Flee to the shade of Academus' grove,
Where cares molest not, discord melts away
In harmony, and the pure passions prove
How sweet the words of Truth, breathed from the lips of Love.

BEATTIE.

To enumerate all the advantages which the poor man receives from the possession of knowledge, would be an endless task. It might be sufficient to say, that his condition is meliorated, whether he be considered as a skilful mechanic, an agreeable companion, an intelligent man, or a well-informed Christian.

It would, however, be doing great injustice to our subject, were we to pass without further observation the blessings which the industrious classes of society derive from a proper acquaintance with *religion*. The importance of this branch of the subject is so great that we fear to touch it, lest our feeble efforts should weaken the force of the argument. The knowledge of our duty to God and man is, undoubtedly, of the highest importance; and the proper discharge of that duty is

instrumental not only in procuring true contentment in this world, but eternal felicity in the next. But a great proportion of the vice and misery which are so prevalent in the world, results from ignorance of the mighty truths of morality and religion. If men, in general, were fully aware of the duties of their respective spheres in life, and possessed a clear conception of the indissoluble connexion subsisting between virtue and happiness, vice and misery,—many of the evils with which they are afflicted would be entirely removed. Correct and honourable views of the paternal character of the Deity are also essentially necessary to true religion and solid happiness. Erroneous conceptions on this point may truly be said to have produced an infinity of evils. Theological ignorance is the parent of error, of superstition, and of bigotry. Her withering looks would blast the fair creation, and her unholy zeal people hell with the victims of her unrelenting wrath. Happy—thrice happy—would it have been for many who call themselves Christians, had they known in reality the principles of the Christian religion, and been actuated by a zeal according to knowledge !

Religious knowledge is surely as well adapted to the condition of the poor man, as to that of the rich. If his circumstances expose him to greater severity of suffering, the more need will he have for the instructions of religion. If he be assailed by the bitter blasts of penury, or borne down by the grievous weight of oppression, there is nothing which is better calculated to mitigate his sorrows, than the consolations of religion. It is recorded in Holy Writ, that “to the poor,” in particular, “was the Gospel preached ;” and that eternal life proceeds from a knowledge of “the only true God, and his Messenger Jesus Christ.” From these and similar declarations it is most reasonable to infer, that the happiness of our nature principally consists in mental enjoyment ; and that if we make, in this world, a due use of our reasoning and active powers, we shall be fitted, in the next, for partaking in the fellowship of the truly great and good of all times,—for progressing in the scale of intellect,—and for becoming more and more assimilated to the Deity, throughout the endless ages of eternity.

If these views of the generous power of knowledge are founded on truth, which we conceive to be unques-

tionable, a nobler stimulus could hardly be presented to the poor man for the improvement of his mind. If, in fine, the means of bodily sustenance, the comforts of civilization, the refined susceptibilities of a taste for literature—if the society of enlightened men—if the blessings of our common Christianity—if immortal happiness itself, result from the possession of knowledge, it must certainly be worthy of being pursued by the humbler classes of the community with all the ardour which they can devote to the pursuit, and on every opportunity that is presented to them in the comparatively unfavourable circumstances of their condition.

W. J.

JUBILEE OF THE REFORMATION.

(FROM "THE FEDERAL," A GENEVESE JOURNAL.)

Geneva, August 28, 1835.

WE promised to our readers to collect some details respecting the different scenes of the festival which Geneva has just celebrated, with such profound and unanimous feelings of patriotism, and religious zeal. We shall endeavour to fulfil our engagement; but no language is sufficiently strong to portray the features which so eminently distinguished our festival, and formed its prevailing character: no words can describe those pure and holy emotions which filled every heart to overflowing, which were depicted on every countenance, and which were the inspiring soul of those ceremonies, so simple, so divested of external and superficial ornament. We might, indeed, describe objects exposed to our senses; we might paint the triumphal magnificence of war, or the solemn pomp of a funeral procession: but to delineate emotions, and emotions of such a nature as, on Saturday and Sunday last, drew together an entire nation in our temples, and our public places; bound soul to soul, throughout the vast multitude, quickened the beating of every heart, and suffused every eye with tears—this, indeed, transcends our abilities to perform. All that we could express in words, would fall so short of the reality, that those who took a share in our proceedings would justly complain of finding nothing in our recital, but a spiritless and faded sketch, although, those who had not been witnesses of

them, might accuse us of extravagance and exaggeration. Our readers will pardon us, therefore, if we confine ourselves to a simple narrative, permitting facts to speak for themselves, and contenting ourselves with supplying a pivot of support, or connecting thread, to recollections, which we are assured, will never depart from the remembrance of those who have had the happiness and the good fortune to participate in our festival.

On Friday, the 21st instant, the Botanic Garden, where the deputations were to unite according as they arrived, presented, from an early hour, an interesting spectacle. It was, indeed, a touching scene, and one which was every moment renewed, when venerable men, who had, in early life, been associates and companions in study, who had not seen other since the days of their youth, and had, ever since, been widely separated, now found each other again,—and, with cordial greetings, revived the recollections of juvenile friendship:—or, when some celebrated name, as it was announced, attracted a crowd of persons rejoicing to approach one of the illustrious learned, or one of the venerable Pastors, of whose talents, and whose merits, they had heard often and so much. Thus, the jubilee of the Reformation has witnessed, among the divines of Germany, France, and Switzerland, the revival of many endearing connexions that had long been interrupted: and Protestant Churches throughout Europe, from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean, from Petersburg to Toulon, from Dublin to Dresden, had representatives in this numerous assemblage.

On Saturday, the 22d, at eight o'clock in the morning, in the Church of the Auditoire, the first solemn re-union took place; presided over by M. Duby, Moderator of the Venerable Company of Pastors. There, as we have learned from some who were privileged to be present, was disclosed a scene unparalleled in the history of Protestantism, and which has produced on all who bore a part in it, an impression that can never be effaced. Called upon, in turn, by the Secretary, each deputation, through its President, gave utterance to those sentiments which it had been commissioned to convey;—sentiments of congratulation, of concord, of unity, of Christian brotherhood, of sympathy in the festival which was about to commence, and in which their respective Churches would participate, by their

prayers. Letters were read from a great number of Protestant Churches, whom distance, or peculiar circumstances hindered from sending deputies, testifying their fraternal affection for Geneva.* Churches, of widely differing theological opinions, had their representatives in this assembly;—and yet, all being rallied together around the Bible, there were heard no words, but the words of peace, of tolerance, and of union, connecting glory to God, and faith in Christ, with goodwill to all mankind. At mid-day, the city, of its own free-will, without any order of the Magistrates, without any intervention of authority, arrayed itself for the festival. The shops, and stores, and bazaars, were every where closed. The gates of all the Churches were thrown open, to admit the children who were repairing thither to receive the medals intended for them, and copies of the admirable history of the Reformation in Geneva,—the work of Professor Cellerier. What a touching spectacle was this!—all our youth, of both sexes, and of every rank, assembled in the name of the God of our Fathers, and surrounded by their parents,—filling every pew, every gallery, every aisle!—all that the human heart contains of pure and tender feeling, was stirred up, and excited within us. The little ones themselves, though at an age so restless, and when it is so difficult to fix the attention, showed by their tranquillity and thoughtfulness, that they partook largely in the general feeling of the nation. A religious sensibility, beyond their years, was manifested in the serious devotion, with which they listened to the pathetic addresses of the Pastors, and in their sweet singing of the beautiful hymns of gratitude to their Creator, for the pure Gospel of his blessed Son; proving that they comprehended every feeling called up by the festival, whose return they were celebrating. Scarcely had this affecting ceremony ended, when the places left by the children were filled by a multitude, who thronged to hear the preparatory service of the jubilee, and to unite with their Pastors in blessing “Him who has been, at all times, the rock and the fortress of our republic.”

* Among these, was a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the name of the prelates of the United Church of England and Ireland, expressing a cordial sympathy with the Church of Geneva, and a fervent hope that the present solemnity may be attended with an abundant effusion of spiritual blessings.

At four o'clock, the children re-assembled, to repair to some rural scenes selected for the purpose, to keep their little fête, and to terminate this memorable day in the unrestrained expression of their innocent gaiety and joy. A heavy rain interfered with this portion of the festival; but this untoward circumstance only produced fresh proofs of the profound interest felt by all our countrymen, in the celebration of the jubilee. Every mansion-house, and country-seat in the neighbourhood was immediately opened by the proprietors, for the reception of the youthful groups, where they were welcomed with the most cordial kindness, and every hospitable attention paid to their accommodation, lest they might suffer from the inclemency of the weather. This kindness will leave indelible impressions on the minds of all our youth. It harmonized well with the other circumstances of the day. As long as Providence shall grant them life, even should they attain to the most protracted old age, they will recollect, with emotion, the third jubilee of the Reformation.

Sunday, 23d. The rising generation having had their fête, the adult members of the republic proceeded to celebrate *theirs*; one worthy of themselves, in harmony with the ever-glorious and memorable epoch they were occupied in commemorating, recalling, at the same moment, their religious reformation and their political regeneration, and, in every respect, becoming a free and Christian people. At the rising of the sun, all the Church bells in the city, in grand and imposing concert, gave forth the signal; and found, in every heart, an echo of grateful acknowledgment and benediction. Scarcely had the temples been opened, when they were filled by immense crowds, which occupied them even to the farthest seats. And oh! how beautiful, religious, sublime, and patriotic, were the words addressed to them! What ardent vows, what fervent prayers, were uplifted to heaven! How insensible that heart, if such there were, which would not unite with them, and which so many recollections of these centuries of our history, concentrated in one single day, could have left cold and indifferent! During eight consecutive hours, from eight in the morning till four in the afternoon, the successive multitudes which filled our temples were not diminished for one moment. Scarcely was a place vacated by one, when it was occupied by another; and

egress became more difficult than entrance, so great was the number of those who were pressing in at the gates. Never, in her happiest days, has our ancient republic manifested more lively zeal, more holy faith, more pious gratitude to HIM to whom she owes so much, more grateful recollection of the founders of her independence,—the restorers of her liberties. What augmented still more the emotion of the assembly was, the presence of two hundred strangers from so many Synods of Protestant divines; who, whether deputed by their Churches, or led to our festival by their own impulse, joined their prayers with those of our nation, shared heartily in its joy, and offered up vows for its prosperity and happiness. At night commenced another scene not less grave, not less imposing, not less solemn, although the entire city was the theatre of action. First, the oratorio was performed in the Cathedral of St. Peter, which was illuminated with the most perfect taste. The sublime strains of the *Te Deum* sometimes rose with a prolonged burst to the vaulted roof, drowning even the rushing sound of the multitude who were crowding together in the porches and the court; sometimes they seemed to die away like a voice suspended by sudden emotion, and no longer finding sound for utterance. To this succeeded the general illumination, not directed by authority,—not commanded,—but the spontaneous expression of the feelings of our country, and of the overflowing hearts of our citizens. It is here we wish for power to depict the admirable appearance of the entire population;—some eagerly bending forward from their dwellings,—some spreading through the streets, and all displaying such good order, such an accommodating spirit, such tact, such politeness, as surpasses all that we could say in its praise. Not content with illuminating their windows and the fronts of their houses, the inhabitants of the different quarters had erected, in various places, triumphal arches adorned with flowers and foliage, supporting variegated lamps, tastefully arranged. The fountains were every where superbly decorated, and resembled pyramids of flame. On every side appeared transparencies and inscriptions, all religious and patriotic; but not one that could give pain or offence to the feelings of any human being, of whatever church or country. Here, a passage of Scripture,—there, a portrait of a Reformer,—farther on, the

arms of Geneva, and the sacred motto,—“*Post tenebras lux.*” Not a cry,—not a profane word,—not an improper expression,—was any where to be heard ; but, upon every countenance beamed forth an expression of the sweetest joy, of the spirit of union, of devoted attachment to their religion, to their country, to their home. Something grave and serious mingled with, and chastened all their effusions ; and every one felt that the sentiments which animated this vast population, must be of an order the most exalted and the most pure !

The quarter of St. Gervais, in particular, was distinguished for the brilliancy and diffusiveness of its illumination. About ten o'clock, the inhabitants of that district, who had placed tables, end to end, all along the principal street, had their supper served up there, to partake of it in common. Then they went to seek their Pastors, that this feast of friendship, of patriotism and of Christian concord, might be honoured with their presence ;—and, when the meal was ended, they escorted them to their respective dwellings, making the air resound with the affectionate expressions of their confidence and attachment. At last, the crowd ebbed by degrees ; the lamps flickered into darkness, one after the other ; and the whole city gradually sunk into profound silence. But, how many hearts were there still palpitating with lively emotions, from the scenes they had just witnessed ! How many citizens, who wished, by repeating the recollections of these two days, a thousand and a thousand times in their thoughts, to engrave them so upon their memory, that they shall never lose their force ! How many families, whom the first hour of the next morning found re-assembled, and absorbed in pouring forth their grateful thanksgivings, for the numberless mercies shed by a bountiful Providence upon their beloved country !

This festival, which many timid persons dreaded, and looked forward to with alarm, as likely to be the occasion of tumult or of discord, will leave, we doubt not, profound traces, not only in the generation which has witnessed it, but, also, in the general tenor of our history. Without speaking of its religious consequences, which it is not our province to develop, what influence will it not exercise in drawing all our citizens into a closer union of affection and patriotism, and in augmenting their mutual confidence and esteem ? Singular and remarkable circumstance ! The jubilee of the Reformation will have

the immediate effect of amalgamating the populace of the two communions, better than twenty years of association have hitherto done. The Catholics of Geneva have exhibited themselves, on this occasion, in the most interesting light. By the part which so great a number of them have taken in the general joy, by the excellent spirit they have displayed, and by the lofty understanding they have manifested of the real nature and the true aim of our solemnity, they have acquired new claims upon the attachment and the esteem of the ancient Genevese population. The Protestants on the other hand, by the care they have taken to avoid all that might appear in a hostile light to their fellow-countrymen, (and that, too, at a time, when, it must be confessed, some inconsiderate persons sought to irritate the Protestant community, by the most imprudent provocations,) have given the most brilliant proof of their perfect tolerance. There is not one of the numerous strangers, who mingled in the groups on Sunday evening, that has not received the most lively impression, and who does not carry with him a feeling of consideration, we will even add, of respect, for the nation which has offered to him so noble a spectacle ; and, in this, we only repeat what we have heard said by several amongst them, who, in the expression of their admiration, declared their intention of sending their children to be educated in a city, where they would receive, from all classes, an example of order, of submission to the laws, of seemly and decorous demeanour ; a city, where the sacred names of religion and liberty have a meaning which is comprehended by all.—And, what is yet better, furnish the practical principles of conduct to the entire population.

Monday, 24th.—The forenoon of this day was occupied in a conference of all the Ecclesiastics of Geneva with the delegates from the foreign Churches. At this conference, matters of the highest interest were dwelt upon ; and the same spirit which was manifested in the first assembly, continued to reign,—the spirit of peace, of affection, of evangelical charity, of ardent zeal, and of holy faith. In the evening, these sentiments were developed with more liberty and energy in the more simple and familiar re-union which was held at Secheron, where all the deputies were entertained by the Pastors of Geneva at a public dinner, after an excursion on the lake. At this social meeting, at which were assembled more

than two hundred and fifty Pastors, Professors, and Deputies from various countries, and of various sentiments, many eloquent addresses were uttered, evincing as much of liberality, as of nobleness and elevation. The wetness of the evening disconcerted the arrangements of the citizens. Every barge, and boat, and shallop, to be found on the borders of our lake, had been prepared to escort the steam-packet which conveyed the Pastors and their venerable guests to Secheron. It was, moreover, contemplated to illuminate, anew, the streets through which they were to return in the evening. But the heavy rain prevented the accomplishment of these intentions, and constrained the people to withhold this concluding testimonial of affection for their Pastors, respect to their visitors, and deep interest in the solemnities of the festival.

Tuesday, 25th.—The population returned to their several occupations, and the city resumed its accustomed aspect. A great number of Deputies took their departure in the morning: those who remained, held one assembly more, where, with one single exception,* the most conciliatory sentiments were universally manifested. Then, at last, they were obliged to separate; and the Deputies took the various routes to their respective homes,—some to the North, others to the South, others to the West or East,—all bearing with them the attachment, the affection, the prayers of their hosts and their colleagues; all, we hope, cherishing a feeling of brotherly kindness towards a country which has shown itself so happy and so proud to possess them even for a few days. The great medal of the jubilee has been given in silver to the Depu-

* One of those British itinerants, who pervert the Gospel of Peace into an instrument of discord, intruded himself into this assembly; and, having obtained permission to speak, uttered a frantic rhapsody, consigning to eternal perdition all who dissented from his dogmas. His speech was similar in virulence, reviling, and denunciation, to the harangues of his brethren at Exeter Hall. To this wild effusion, one of the Pastors of Geneva made an eloquent reply,—so rational and dignified, so replete with sentiments of pure Christian benevolence, and vindicating, so powerfully, the principles of universal toleration, by arguments, drawn from the words of Christ himself, and his inspired Apostles,—that it made an impression on the minds of his auditors, such as will never be forgotten. This reply, together with the concluding prayer of the Moderator,—its meek spirit, its fervent piety, its calm devotion and universal charity,—formed the most remarkable contrast to the wretched bigotry of the person who had so unhappily drawn upon himself the notice of the meeting.

ties, and in bronze, to all the other Ecclesiastics who have assisted at the festival. Worthy of its celebrated engraver, M. Bovy, this medal represents, on one side, the Bible on an altar "*Restored to Reason and Faith*:" on the other, the portraits of Farel, Viret, Calvin, and Beza. It will serve to recall to all those who have taken a part in it, the important solemnity which we have just celebrated; and will prove to them, that republics are not so ungrateful as some would represent, nor so disposed to give up the memory of those to whom, under God, they owe their existence.

REVIEW.

The works of William Ellery Channing, D. D. vol. I.
pp. 466. James Hedderwick and Sons, Glasgow, 1835.

(Continued from p. 374.)

WE have already noticed this volume and recommended it in high, but not exaggerated terms to general perusal. We now return to it for the purpose of laying before the readers of the Bible Christian the views of this celebrated author on the Evidences of Christianity. Anxiously do we wish that we could give to them his several discourses complete, and thus present a clear, connected, and eloquent summary of the argument on which the divine origin of our faith is built; but we must be satisfied with a few brief extracts. We trust, however, that they may invite attention to the work itself, and thus arm many against the insinuating influence of infidelity.

Dr. Channing proves, by several arguments, that Revelation is not at war with nature, and shows that the earliest instruction must have been *supernatural*. Our race must have had a beginning; and its first members, created without human parentage, had no resource for instruction in the experience of others, and must therefore have derived whatever knowledge they possessed immediately from their Creator. The next inquiry is into the external evidences; which are abundant and convincing. We know the *time* and *place* in which Christianity was published; we know the author by whom it was introduced, and the ministers through whom he preached it to the world; and we know the apostolic writings, the genuineness and authenticity of which are established by every proof that could be de-

sired. It were impossible, within our limits to detail the various evidences on which our author dwells. Let us single out one which all can understand and which comes home to the breast of every Christian—we mean the character of the Saviour. This is an argument which the most ignorant can comprehend, which the most learned must value. We shall present it in his own words.

“The first distinction of Jesus was a philanthropy without mixture and without bounds; a philanthropy, uniting grandeur and meekness in beautiful proportions; a philanthropy as wise as it was fervent, which comprehended the true wants and the true good of man, which compassionated, indeed, his sufferings from abroad, but which saw in the soul the deep fountain of his miseries, and laboured, by regenerating this, to bring him to a pure and enduring happiness. So peculiar, so unparalleled was the benevolence of Jesus, that it has impressed itself on all future times. There went forth a virtue, a beneficent influence from his character which operates even now. Since the death of Christ, a spirit of humanity unknown before, has silently diffused itself over a considerable portion of the earth. A new standard of virtue has gradually possessed itself of the veneration of men. A new power has been acting on society, which has done more than all other causes combined, to disarm the selfish passions, and to bind men strongly to one another and to God. What a monument have we here to the virtue of Jesus! and if Christianity has such a founder, it must have come from heaven.

“There are other remarkable proofs of the power and elevation of the character of Christ. It has touched and conciliated not a few of the determined adversaries of his religion. Infidelity, whilst it has laid unsparing hands on the system, has generally shrunk from offering violence to its author. In truth, unbelievers have occasionally borne eloquent testimony to the benignant and celestial virtues of Jesus; and I record this with pleasure, not only as honorable to Christianity, but as showing that unbelief does not universally sear the moral feelings or breathe hostility to goodness. Nor is this all. The character of Christ has withstood the most deadly and irresistible foe of error and unfounded claims—I mean Time. It has lost nothing of its elevation by the improvements of ages. Since he appeared, society has gone forward, men’s views have become enlarged, and philosophy has risen to conceptions of far purer virtue than were the boast of antiquity. But however the human mind may have advanced, it must still look upward, if it would see and understand Christ. He is still above it: nothing purer, nobler, has yet dawned on human thoughts. Then Christianity is true. The delineation of Jesus in the Gospels, so warm with life, and so unrivalled in loveliness and grandeur, required the existence of an original. To suppose that this character was invented by unprincipled men, amidst Jewish and heathen darkness, and was then imposed as a reality, in the very age of the Founder of Christianity, argues an excess of credulity, and a strange ignorance of the powers and principles of human nature. The character of Jesus was real;

and if so, Jesus must have been what he professed to be, the Son of God, and the revealer of his mercy and will to mankind."—p. 417.

In combating the objections which many make to miracles as inconsistent with the perfections of Deity—opposed to the laws of nature, and unnecessary to the knowledge of human beings, we meet the following striking passage:—

"I say, thirdly, there is one great point, on which we are deeply concerned to know the truth, and which is yet taught so indistinctly by nature, that men, however disposed to learn, cannot by that light alone obtain full conviction. What, let me ask, is the question in which each man has the deepest interest? It is this, are we to live again; or is this life all? Does the principle of thought perish with the body; or does it survive? And if it survive, where? how? in what condition? under what law? There is an inward voice which speaks of judgment to come. Will judgment indeed come? and if so what award may we hope or fear? The future state of man, this is the great question forced on us by our changing life, and by approaching death. I will not say, that on this topic nature throws no light. I think it does; and this light continually grows brighter to them whose eyes revelation has couched and made strong to see. But nature alone does not meet our wants. I might prove this by referring you to the ages preceding Christ, when the anxious spirit of man constantly sought to penetrate the gloom beyond the grave, when imagination and philosophy alike plunged into the future, but found no resting-place. But every man must feel that, left to nature as his only guide, he must wander in doubt as to the life to come. Where but from God himself, can I learn my destination? I ask at the mouth of the tomb for intelligence of the departed, and the tomb gives me no reply. I examine the various regions of nature, but I can discover no process for restoring the mouldering body, and no sign or track of the spirit's ascent to another sphere. I see the need of a power above nature to restore or perpetuate life after death; and if God intended to give assurance of this life, I see not how he can do it but by supernatural teaching, by a miraculous revelation. Miracles are the appropriate and would seem to be the only mode of placing beyond doubt man's future and immortal being; and no miracles can be conceived so peculiarly adapted to this end as the very ones which hold the highest place in Christianity,—I mean the resurrection of Lazarus, and still more, the resurrection of Jesus. No man will deny that, of all truths, a future state is most strengthening to virtue and consoling to humanity. Is it, then, unworthy of God to employ miracles for the awakening or the confirmation of this hope? may they not even be expected, if nature, as we have seen, sheds but a faint light on this most interesting of all verities?"—p. 405.

We would gladly make further extracts from this portion of the volume; we would exhibit the reasonableness of Christianity as it has been abundantly demonstrated by Dr. Channing. We would go with him into the volume of nature—compare it with the teachings of

Revelation, and admire the wondrous and beautiful harmony in which they meet. We would trace the evidence of one Supreme Divinity in the earth, the ocean, and the sky; and then behold this great truth as it is declared in the Bible.—We would mark the workings of an impartial and benevolent Father, as we can see them displayed in creation and providence; and then turning the page of inspiration, we would read there the deep, unfathomable, universal love of God. Or, on the other hand, we would consider the many objections that the unbeliever has made against the corruptions of our faith, and show that they belong not to the pure, primitive, rational religion of the beloved Jesus. We would, for example, single out the doctrine of the Trinity, and regarding it as it is imaged forth in the creed of Athanasius, we would then search—but search in vain—for the original in the teachings of the Saviour. Or, we might consider the opinions of those—sincere Christians as we believe they are—who would represent mankind as totally and necessarily depraved, and the vast majority of them as under an unchangeable decree of everlasting death, and contrast them with the words of Jesus, when he took children in his arms, and blessing them said, in the accents of love, “of such is the kingdom of heaven;” or in the language of the same Redeemer when he invites all—all who are weary and heavy-laden to come unto him and find rest unto their souls. But we hope that our readers will be led to consult and study the volume itself, and in that hope, we shall content ourselves with quoting the following conclusion of one of his discourses :—

“I have no fears from infidelity; especially from that form of it which some are at this moment labouring to spread through our country; I mean that insane, desperate unbelief, which strives to quench the light of nature as well as of revelation, and to leave us not only without Christ, but without God. This I dread no more than I should fear the efforts of men to pluck the sun from his sphere, or to storm the skies with the artillery of the earth. We were made for religion, and unless the enemies of our faith can change our nature, they will leave the foundation of religion unshaken. The human soul was created to look above material nature. It wants a Deity for its love and trust, an immortality for its hope. It wants consolations not found in philosophy, wants strength in temptation, sorrow, and death, which human wisdom cannot minister; and knowing, as I do, that Christianity meets these deep wants of men, I have no fear or doubt as to its triumphs. Men cannot long live without religion. In France there is a spreading dissatisfaction

with the sceptical spirit of the past generation. A philosopher in that country would now blush to quote Voltaire as an authority in religion. Already Atheism is dumb where once it seemed to bear sway. The greatest minds in France are working back their way to the light of truth. Many of them, indeed, cannot yet be called Christians; but their path, like that of the wise men of old, who came star-guided from the East, is towards Christ. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It has an immortal life, and will gather strength from the violence of its foes. It is equal to all the wants of men. The greatest minds have found in it the light which they most anxiously desired. The most sorrowful and broken spirits have found in it a healing balm for their woes. It has inspired the sublimest virtues and the loftiest hopes. For the corruptions of such a religion I weep, and I should blush to be their advocate, but of the gospel itself I can never be ashamed."—p. 420.

We shall look for the second volume of this elegant and comprehensive edition with much interest; and cordially wish the spirited publisher that success, which his zeal and enterprize so well deserve.

REVIEW.

Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy; by the Rev.
JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE, London, 1835. 8vo.

(Continued from p, 381.)

IN our last notice of this excellent publication, after a short sketch of the life of the author, and a brief reference to the sacrifices which he has at various times made to the cause of conscience, we laid before our readers the preface, in which he states the mental process by which he was led to embrace the opinions propounded in the work now before us. According to our original purpose, we now proceed to give a brief analysis and summary of its contents.

In his first letter, after showing that the term *Christian Truth* can properly signify nothing else than the impression produced on each individual mind by the words of the Bible, Mr. White adverts to the undeniable fact, that the phrase is commonly employed among Christians to denote, not the convictions at which each individual has arrived,—but the impression and conviction of some theological sect or church. Opposition to such standards is what men call HERESY. Conformity to them, or in other words, the belief of some rule of faith different from individual conviction founded on the Bible, is what men mean by ORTHODOXY. He next proves that the use of this phraseology necessarily im-

plies the existence of some supreme and infallible tribunal of truth and falsehood, distinct from the testimony of Christ and his apostles ; and thereby concedes the main question which is in controversy between the Catholic and Protestant Churches. He farther proves that this concession is fatal to Christianity itself ; and satisfactorily shows that similar consequences are deducible from the ordinary use of the phrase *Saving Faith*. His own system may be thus briefly expressed. The original condition of Christian communion, is the *acceptance of Christ as a supreme religious guide*. This acceptance of him implies the *submission of the will* to him ; but *no prostration of the understanding*. It does not, of itself, guarantee the disciple from error, which may and must be produced by natural causes. But upon these errors *no human being is authorised to sit in judgment*, or to pronounce authoritatively. No man therefore who accepts Christ as his supreme religious guide, is to be deprived of the advantages of Christian communion on account of his supposed HERESY, or his want of that which men call ORTHODOXY.

From this brief statement of the object of these letters, it will be apparent that a great number of collateral topics will present themselves, and will require attentive consideration. Among such questions may be mentioned the scriptural meaning of the term *heresy* :—the nature, office, and province of *human reason* :—the definition of *Christian liberty* :—the supposed necessity of *unity in opinion* :—the commonly admitted distinction between *essential and non-essential doctrines* :—the supposed culpability of *mental error* :—the effects of the common notion of *Orthodoxy* :—its necessary connexion with *intolerance* :—its utility in maintaining the *self-importance* of nominally Christian teachers, &c. &c. Upon all these subjects Mr. White touches with an admirable force and logical acumen ; but without the least bitterness or acrimony ; without a spark of that intolerance which he so eloquently rebukes. We select almost at random the following passage as a specimen of the style of the observations. After a most impressive call on the professors to Christianity to adhere to *veracity*, in the statement of those convictions to which they have attained by means of the study of the Sacred Scripture ; Mr. W. thus depicts the consequences to be expected from such conduct as he recommends.

“From faithfulness to the duty of VERACITY, the Christian world might finally derive the inestimable advantage of knowing what is the most general, most distinct, and most lasting impression of the Scriptures on the *collective* intellect of those to whom they are *collectively* addressed. That impression, if gathered from the free and unbiassed examination of the most intelligent portion of the Christian world, might properly be called the *natural* sense of the Scriptures, the sense which Providence intends to prevail. In what department of knowledge do we see, or could a civilized nation endure, the method which is followed in regard to religion? I have, indeed, heard and read of some attempts to perpetuate, by means of oaths, some particular theory of medicine, which at some time or other was considered to have arrived at a perfection above all possibility of improvement. I am aware that the pupils of the school of Hippocrates vowed to the Gods never to perform or recommend the operation of lithotomy; and I recollect to have seen, many years ago, in a book written against the use of the Jesuits’ Bark, a sentence of excommunication which a high ecclesiastical authority (I have an idea that it was the Pope) had fulminated against any practitioner of medicine that prescribed it. Similar attempts to stop the progress of knowledge, just at the point where the stoppage suited the vanity, the indolence, and interest of some powerful body of men, have been frequent; but they have been gradually swept off by the progress of civilization. Yet the same method of keeping down all Christians to the measure of a certain standard, continues to this day in the fullest vigour. The physician who, in order to please some great and powerful association of medical men, should be found reporting cases, contrary to the *impression* of his mind, would justly be ranked with the lowest and most odious individuals of our species. He who, upon receiving his medical diploma, should solemnly engage never to depart from a curative system, upon which the professors of the faculty had been fiercely contending for many ages, would be said to betray the interests of humanity. Why?—Because it is well known that the only security we possess against the perpetuation of error; the only means for its final separation from truth, with which it always mixes itself more or less, is free discussion between unbiassed minds. But it has been decided otherwise in regard to religion. The BIBLE, that book in which all Christians “think they possess the means of eternal life,” but about which, experience has also forced Protestants, at least, to agree, that like the simples employed in healing the body, it is exposed to great mismanagement:—the Bible, concerning which such furious contentions have taken place—the Bible alone, among all the objects of highest importance to man, must be applied according to *privileged systems*. Though the difficulty of establishing the sense of the Bible on subjects about which Christians have destroyed Christians without mercy, is attested by the blood of the victims, and the chances of error in the decisions which constitute the established orthodoxies, may be calculated by the frenzy of the passions which attended those decisions; nevertheless, those systems must be perpetuated by the engagement of passions still more dangerous to truth and veracity than the pride and resentment which carried heretics to the stake. That the Roman Catholics,

who have persuaded themselves that by a perpetual miracle, no error was, at any time, permitted to form part of their church's creed, should fence that creed with every thing that can secure to it the awe and the attachment of both the clergy and the laity, is perfectly natural and intelligible. But that Protestants should continue to imitate the same conduct and practice, in respect to creeds, to interpretations of Scripture, in which all acknowledge that there may be errors, is one of the strangest inconsistencies which the history of civilized nations attests. In the mean time, and by the direct influence of this system, divisions which time and reflection might heal, are rendered perpetual and incurable. Under these artificial securities, under these regular combinations of men, thus solemnly bound not to depart from a certain view of Scripture, no gradual approach to a brotherly conformity can be made. The general sense of Christians cannot be progressively ascertained by the transition of one body of men into another. If any one ventures to examine the points in question, he is obliged to weigh his doubts in secret, as if he were meditating a crime. To doubt any of the principal doctrines which are used as the colours of these compactly organized and disciplined bodies, is to meditate desertion; to deny their truth, is not a change of opinion—as in other disputed matters—it is joining the ranks of the most detested rebels. Under such circumstances, can there be a possibility of finally rendering the Scriptures what they should be,—the bond of union, both of intellect and heart, among those who bear the name of Christians?

“Alas! were it not for the baneful power of ORTHODOXY—of that pretended duty of agreeing with the doctrines which, at some earlier or later period, became the nucleus, the bond of a church-party, we might long since have learnt, by the united and freely compared experience of the Christian world, either what is the most natural sense of Scripture on the disputed doctrines, or (what is more probable) a general conviction might have been established, that the field of metaphysical speculation has been left free, in order that individuals may indulge their peculiar intellectual tendencies, provided they do not interfere with the opposite tendencies of others. But what we now possess is not the intellectual experience of the millions of Christians who, in the course of many centuries, have joined the various standards of belief: their assent has never been free and unbiassed—at least, we have strong reasons to suspect its freedom. The Christian world has been divided into proselyting parties, who, assisted by secular power, and frequently using or threatening violence, have recruited their ranks, and prevented desertion by means totally unconnected with free and deliberate conviction. If, perchance, a certain number of individuals have really and fully coincided with the standard of faith adopted by their church, the early prepossessions in which they have been brought up, the spiritual terrors of heresy which have been deeply impressed on their minds (not to mention attractions and trammels of another kind,) take away more than half the value of their testimony. We have, indeed, no reason to doubt the sincerity of individuals from general surmises. But though we highly respect the attainments, and venerate the virtues of many who have been

and are still solemnly bound to support the peculiar interpretations and doctrines of some peculiar church which definitely limits the sense of Scripture by articles, instead of qualifying the sense of those articles by the sense which the subscriber finds, or may find in Scripture; we cannot consider the impression which the Scripture has left on their minds as an experimental instance of the natural sense or mental result of those books. The experiment, like many of those attested in the history of alchemy, has been made in a vessel not at all free from substances which ought not to have been there."

A Funeral Sermon, on the Death of JOHN M'CANCE, Esq. M. P.: delivered in the Meeting-House of Dunmurry; by the Rev. HENRY MONTGOMERY, L. L. D. on Sunday, August 23, 1835. Belfast, J. Hodgson; and S. Archer, pp. 35.

AN affectionate, and, what is much more important, a just tribute to the memory of one of the best and most amiable of men. A more interesting or useful funeral discourse, it has never been our lot to read; and greatly do we regret that the lateness of its publication puts it out of our power to enrich our pages with any portion of its contents. We can only find room for the following biographical preface; which will supersede an obituary notice that we had ourselves prepared for the present number.

"MR. M'CANCE was born in the year 1772. His father, JOHN M'CANCE, was a man of singular generosity and kindness; and his mother, JANE CHARLEY, was a woman of exemplary moral worth, and endowed with all the domestic virtues. He received his education at the Belfast Academy, under Dr. CROMIE and Dr. BRUCE; and at a very early period of his life, he entered into the Linen Trade, with which the name of M'CANCE has been so long and so honourably connected. In the year 1801, he was made a magistrate: in 1825, he was appointed High Sheriff of the County of Down: and two years afterwards, he filled the same important office in the County of Antrim. His private virtues and his public integrity pointed him out to the liberal inhabitants of Belfast as a suitable Representative in the Reformed United Parliament; and he was elected to that honourable station on the 17th of January, 1835, after an arduous contest of five days, and in opposition to LORD ARTHUR CHICHESTER, son to the MARQUIS OF DONEGALL. Having discharged, for five months, the important duties committed to his care with an assiduity and faithfulness never surpassed, he was suddenly carried away from the devoted affections of his private friends, and a station of much public usefulness, in the sixty-third year of his age. He died in London, of a bilious fever, occasioned by unremitting attention to his Parliamentary duties, upon Tuesday, the 11th day of August, 1835." "The memory of the just is blessed."

NATIVE UNITARIAN CHRISTIANS IN INDIA.

WE have, in former numbers, alluded to the efforts made by WILLIAM ROBERTS, a Hindoo converted to Christianity, to disseminate a knowledge of Unitarianism among his countrymen in the South of India. We find in the Tenth Report of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the following extracts from his correspondence. It should be stated, that all the individuals who are mentioned by name have been converted to Christianity by the arguments of WILLIAM ROBERTS, and that several among them are actively engaged in undertakings for spreading the truth still more extensively. May their labours be abundantly blessed! Some of our fellow-Christians are accustomed to boast of the number and variety of their missionary enterprises. Let them show, among them all, five such instances of *unbought* native labourers in the missionary field as are presented in the persons of William Roberts, David Savermooto, Abraham Chiniah, P. Aarumugam, and Simon Karcadagalingam Pilly! These five individuals, though in humble circumstances, (several of them being obliged to earn their subsistence by laborious professions,) have done more for the progress of Christianity in India, than a hundred missionaries, supported by the contributions of the faithful in England, at the yearly expense of thousands of pounds.

“I beg to present my grateful thanks to my respectable friends for the favourable attention they have given to my letter of the 10th of September, 1832, regarding my earnest wish to print my Notes and Discourses on the Harmony of the Gospels. From your saying ‘Notes and Discourses on the Bible, taken from Dr. Priestley’s works, with Additions,’ in Tamil, I think you comprehend my statement on the subject. The substance of my Notes and Discourses are from Dr. Priestley’s Harmony of the Four Evangelists, and from many other of his works. To assist me further in my interpretation and illustration of many passages, I have had the Rev. T. Lindsey’s Apology and Sequel, his first and second Addresses to the Students of Oxford and Cambridge, his Examination of Mr. Robinson’s (of Cambridge) Plea, his Conversations on Divine Government, and several other of his books; Rev. T. Belsham’s Calm Inquiry, and several other of his books, and lately his Exposition on the Epistles of St. Paul; Dr. Carpenter’s Unitarian-

ism; Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity; Rev. J. Yates' Vindication of Unitarianism; Rev. T. Rees' Racovian Catechism; T. Southwood Smith's Divine Government; Rev. R. Wright's Unitarian Doctrine, and abundance of his other tracts; Dr. Samuel Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity; Dr. Doddridge's Family Expositor, with exception of the first volume; Whiston's Translation of Flavius Josephus's Works; and many other books. If my friends should think of any other author's exposition most likely to assist me in my interpretation and illustration of the Scriptures, I earnestly solicit them to bless me with such a work.

"The press is now become free at Madras. I have had the choice of going to another printer in last year. The price of paper stands much the same as formerly, but the printing is nearly half less than what it was before. I think now my Notes and Discourses will be printed £100 less than what I had calculated before; if please God that so it takes place, I shall print 250 or 300 copies. The price for printing 250 or 500 copies is the same; and as there is no chance of their being sold, I should not think of printing more than 250 or 300 copies.

"In answer to your inquiry, 'I should wish to be informed in what part of the East Indies Tamil is spoken and read, and by what proportion of the population it is used,' I copy the following from Mr. Benjamin Babington's preface to his book called 'The Adventurers of the Gooto Paramarton, Published in London, by J. M. Richardson, 23, Cornhill, 1822:'

"'The Tamil language is spoken by a population of more than five millions, being current in the southern portion of the Peninsula of India, throughout the Jaghire, the districts of South Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore, Coombaconum, Tanjour, Trichinopoly, Madura, Dendigull, and Tinnivelly, as well as in many parts of the extensive kingdom of Mysore.'

"Nearly one fifth of this population, I should think can read and write.* Madras, Cuddalore, Nagapatam, Tranquebar, Coombaconum, Tanjore, Pallameottah, Jaffna in Ceylon, and some other places, are principal Protestant Missionary stations for propagating the Gospel

*In a subsequent letter, dated August 28, 1834, W. Roberts says, "Upon further consideration and inquiry, it appears of this population one twentieth part of the males only can read and write. All other accounts in that letter are right."

among the Tamil population. Schools and other seminaries are established and churches built for their use. The Bibles and Testaments have gone through several editions; religious tracts and other books also in Tamil are published and circulated in abundance, by which you will be able to understand the population of the Tamil people. The Gentoo population begins some distance to the north of Madras, and Hindoostanee is still much further to the north. The language spoken at Secunderabad is Hindoostanee and Gentoo. The Tamil language is spoken by sepoys and camp followers who have settled there.

“With regard to your inquiry about our school-books, &c.—first, the Tamil alphabet contains 5 short and 7 long vowels, and 18 consonants; the former joined to the latter, form 216 syllables: with another letter the whole number becomes 247 shapes: these are pronounced in two different ways; the first is common to all teachers and scholars; the second is in use among the grammarians only.

“Those who have learnt in the first method to pronounce and spell, if they come to learn the Grammar, must learn their letters and syllables again before they can make any progress: this is very tedious and irksome to the learners. To remedy this inconvenience, I persuaded my friend the late Miguel Annathy (our first schoolmaster of Pursewaukum,) to adopt the second method, which is now in use in all our schools; viz. Pursewaukum, Secunderabad, Saint Thomas’s Mount, Chillumbrum, and in a school at Royapettah. This is an essential difference between our schools and others. Second, in native schools, generally, after the boys have learnt their letters and syllables, small books, one after the other, containing verses in poem, are put into their hands. They are seldom taught to spell: in this way many lads will repeat a number of verses by heart, without knowing the meaning, before they can put half a dozen letters together. To remedy this, I have written on cadjan, spelling lessons, (which are often copied out,) from words of two to nine letters, divided into eight distinct sections, with suitable moral lessons in the end of every section, from the second. If please God, I should like to have this printed.* Our

*The European Missionaries have lately printed spelling-books, and also single sheets, containing words of one, two, three, and four syllables, for the use of schools.

next books are Arithmetic; Practical Instructions for Youth, which I have translated from English, and printed in the year 1829, being the fourteenth of my Tracts; Church Catechism Reformed; Hymns, which we sing in our divine service; one hundred verses of miscellaneous poetry on religion and morals, composed by me, and printed by my brethren; Corruptions of Christianity, first and second parts, in verse and prose; Irusamiattharass, in verse and prose;—all these come one after the other: these, with the Bible, are our school-books. Thirdly, generally our family prayer begins about eight o'clock in the morning, in which the schoolmaster and the scholars present join us. First, we sing a hymn, then read two chapters either in the Old or New Testament, as the course happens, one chapter in the Proverbs, one or two psalms; at the end of which we add the doxology, 'now unto the King eternal, immortal, invissible, the only God, be honour and glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever and ever. Amen.' And we conclude it with the Lord's Prayer. Then the schoolmaster begins the school by reading the morning prayer contained in the Instructions for Youth; then they begin to read their old lessons. Afterwards the younger boys write upon the sand; the elder boys that can write, write their copies on cadjan, and do their ciphering; at eleven o'clock they deliver their old lessons, and receive new ones; at twelve they are sent away for dinner; at two oclock the school begins again. The small boys write their old lessons of spelling upon the sand; the bigger boys write their numeration and multiplication tables on sand likewise. After that, one boy reads the above-mentioned miscellaneous poetry, and the rest repeat it: then the first class boys read the Bible, others, according to their advancement, read catechism, &c. About five o'clock in the evening they again deliver their reading-lessons and take new ones; when that is done, one boy repeats a psalm, the rest after him, and conclude either with the evening-prayer that is in the Instructions for Youth, or with the Lord's Prayer. Half-after-five they are sent home. This is the daily practice both here and elsewhere in our schools. It used to be the practice of some of my brethren to examine the school once a month. This, by degrees, they found to be inconvenient to them. Afterwards Marriapah used to examine once a month; but

since his death it is left to me entirely ; and I examine the boys once every Friday, to ascertain their progress. On Saturday we have only half school, on Sunday no school at all. Fourthly, the heathen and Catholic boys seldom come to the chapel. I never compel them against their own inclination or that of their parents. The object of the latter is, that their boys may be educated so as to read, write, and understand accounts, that it may be of use to them in their worldly affairs. Our object, in the first place, is, that our own children may be educated, and those of the heathens and Catholics, by reading our books, (in which the doctrine of one God, the creator, governor, and preserver of the universe, the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, a future life by the resurrection from the dead, morals, the injurious tendency of idolatry, are taught in the plainest words possible,) may understand what our own religious views are, and think for themselves when grown up. Since our school began, besides our own children, many young lads, both heathens and Catholics, have received education, and left the school: they are now doing tolerably well for themselves. These young men, although they understand our excellent religion, owing to their connexions and the prejudices of their relations, do not profess it openly. Fifthly, the parents of these young men generally being poor, were not able to pay anything towards the education of their children. My brethren did contribute something towards our school formerly, which I have regularly mentioned in my yearly accounts ; but owing to the want of rain, and provisions growing dear, they have not been able to contribute anything nearly the last two years.

“ Your account of my son Joseph’s visit to London, your approbation of his progress in knowledge, and your arrangement with the Rev. Mr. Beard to supply all his reasonable wants, are satisfactory to myself and family, for which we render you our grateful thanks. I earnestly pray the Supreme Ruler of all will bless the pure and benevolent intentions of his servants, and make him an intelligent and useful instrument to further His pure religion in this country. I shall not fail, in my communications, to impress on his mind, to the best of my abilities, the great and important purposes for which my respectable friends are running the expense and pains of educating him.

“I am much concerned to hear of the death of that excellent man Rajah Rammohun Roy. If he has published anything new on the subject of religion since his stay in England, I should be thankful to my friends for a copy or two of such a work. We are all pretty well, thank God.”

In a subsequent letter, dated May 31st, 1834, after acknowledging the receipt of a parcel of tracts, which he says afforded abundance of consolation and refreshment, he gives a truly interesting, but somewhat painful, description of the difficulties and privations with which the open profession of Unitarianism is sure to be followed in his own country.

“After P. Aarumugam Pilly returned to Chillumbrum, as I mentioned in my letter of 31st January, Simon Karcadagalingam Pilly went to Coombaconum, staid there some time, and came to me in the beginning of last month. He states that he went to visit several of those schoolmasters who had our tracts in his former visits: they received him kindly, and told him that they have read the tracts that were put in their hands by him, and find the contents agreeable to the Scriptures and their common apprehension; but the Reverend Missionary gentleman who examines the schools, having found one of our tracts, *One Hundred Scriptural Arguments for the Unitarian Faith*, in English and Tamil, in the possession of one of the schoolmasters, by name Kanagasalby Pilly, (from whom, as well as several others, I have received letters in last year, and in return wrote them answer, and sent some of our tracts with it,) got displeased with him, and, after some vexatious usage, turned him out from the school, and an express order was given to all the schoolmasters, not to receive Unitarian tracts, or propagate Unitarian principles; thus they are debarred from the free discussion of Unitarianism. Several of the schoolmasters, though heathens, being intelligent men, like the Unitarian principles, yet they are too poor in their worldly affairs, and are afraid to speak it openly, lest they be turned out of their employ.

“From communications of P. Aarumugam Pilly and others at Chillumbrum, as well as from S. Karcadagalingam Pilly’s own experience during his stay there, our humble brethren are not only under hardships on account of their religious change, but also have to suffer

through want of employment; most of these men being bricklayers, and coolies employed under the bricklayers, the wealthy Bramins and others, who dread the principles of Unitarian Christianity as a dead blow to their idolatry and superstition, look upon them as men who have defiled themselves by changing their religion, and would not employ them in their buildings as formerly.

“The wearing of ash-marks or red streaks on their foreheads are signs of different sects of idolatrous rites; these men do not wear any of these marks on account of their being essential parts of idolatry, and their opponents not choosing to understand the reason of their discontinuing these marks, malignantly calumniate them in the ears of their idolatrous neighbours as men who have lost their caste, and forfeited the kindness of the public.

“Their case is hard, but they have not taken up our principles either in hurry or rashly; they know full well Unitarians in this country are but few and poor, and under great disadvantages; nothing could have induced them to declare for Unitarian Christianity, but its sublime truths, consolatory and comprehensive principles. May our Heavenly Father, for whose truth's sake they endure privation and suffer reproaches, bless their good intentions, and strengthen them under their difficulties, and guide them in the path of their duties, that they may surmount all difficulties, and stand firm in the Faith that they have embraced!

“Chillumbrum is a famous place for idolatry; it abounds with Bramins, Pandarums, and Poets, well versed in mythology, who live upon the offerings that are offered to the idols by devotees, yet they are unable to produce any reasonable arguments, for their superstitions and distinction of castes, against P. Aarumugam Pilly and his friends, besides the antiquity, superstitious sanctity of the place, and the multitude of its devotees. As the place is of great resort from all parts, please God, I am determined to secure a place for our mission there, and have sent twenty pagodas by Simon Karcadagalingam Pilly in last month, as an advance to the owner of the ground on which our school stands.

“The revising and writing fresh my notes and discourses on the harmony of the Gospels I have brought to a conclusion, and have just begun to revise my notes and discourses on the Acts of the Apostles.”

In a letter, dated August, 1834, he gives an account of the instruction and conversion of the young man, named Jacob Kychel, which is as follows.

“Jacob Kychel, a Malay of Amboyna, of Roman Catholic parents, while yet young, left his native country, and made several voyages to different parts of India, as gentleman’s servant, and arriving at Madras, made a longer stay here. Unfortunately, he became acquainted with some heathens, who, instead of directing him to his own religion, taught him heathen principles, and got him married among the heathens agreeably to their superstition. Though he was generally employed in English gentlemen’s service, yet he did not trouble himself about the religion of his parents; but having had a son whom he placed in our Pursewaukum school for education, during the time of the boy’s education, David Saverymooto, then schoolmaster, became acquainted with Kychel and his family. After a long and free conversation on the subject of Christian religion, by degrees Kychel and his wife became inclined to receive Unitarianism, but it was five or six years before they could make up their mind fully. About two months ago, Kychel had his wife and son baptized in our chapel, and himself also joined us. Kychel is about forty years of age, speaks English and Tamil, but never learned to read. Lately, by our persuasion, he learned the English alphabet, and is now reading the monosyllable. David Saverymooto is his teacher. He bears a very good character. His son, Joseph Kychel, is between thirteen and fourteen years of age; he reads Tamil, and now learns English.

“Another young man, who was educated in our school at Pursewaukum, lately received baptism.”

It appears that his friends, the Pilly family, keep journals of their visits to the neighbouring towns and villages, viz., Coombaconum, Najore, Negapatam, Sheccally, Kill-vellore, Karicall, Tranquebar, Portnovio, and several other small stations. In all these places, he says, there are some hearers and readers of our tracts. Though the profession of our sentiments is rare, yet our opinions and tracts are spreading in these parts.

“Aarumugam Pilly has made tolerable progress in reading the Scriptures and controversial books, as well as in mythology, and Karcadagalingam Pilly nearly the same. They can teach our views to others, argue, and

defend Unitarian Christianity against the attacks of both the Heathens and Trinitarians, and I trust their further progress in their attainments and exemplary life will be of great use in furthering our cause; they can both have access to heathen devotees and people of high castes. The verbal opposition of the Bramins and Pandarums is great, but they have continued in their open profession of our faith, I hope they will continue so, and excite many to inquiry. I beg to recommend them both to my respectable Unitarian friends. I intend to send Karcadagalingum Pilly in the course of next month."

To the Rev. E. Tagart.

"Reverend Sir,

"Paul Aarumugam Pilly continues his regular correspondence with me, by which I understand that he and his friends endeavour to communicate religious truth, by conversation and circulation of our tracts, at Chillumbrum, and towns and villages near about it. Simon Karcadagalingum Pilly, though chiefly residing with P. Aarumugam Pilly at Chillumbrum, occasionally takes a circuit to Negapatam, Coombaconum, Mayaveram, and other places, and does the same. It was S. Karcadagalingum Pilly's turn to visit Madras in this month, but by communication from P. Aarumugam Pilly, under date 26th of this month, he is gone from Negapatam to Coombaconum. He expects him soon, and then he will send him here with his journal. I have often felt the want of David Savermooto's service, and particularly to go over the grounds they are treading, he being well acquainted with our religious principles and views, and I could confide in his information; but, unluckily, he is out of our employ. I am thus put to strait at a time when I am in much want of such a person. Though David Savermooto is not in our service, he behaves as becometh a good Christian, and endeavours to serve the cause of truth as much as lies in his power. I am satisfied with his conduct, and I would gladly have taken him again into the service, if I could pay him; but this is not the case, and I am obliged to forego the usefulness of his service.

"A Bramin, named Soopa Sastrec, one of P. Aarumugam Pilly's hearers, from Shecally, a town about thirteen miles south of Chillumbrum, wrote me a letter, speaking highly of Unitarianism, and acknowledging, that although their respective systems of Siva and

Vishnoo speak of a Paraparamam (a Supreme Being,) yet they are encumbered with many errors and inconsistencies; and he requested me to favour him with a copy of my *Irusamiattharass* gratis, which, he says, is calculated to root out the worship of Siva and Vishnoo. Agreeably to his request, I sent him a copy of it.

“Another of P. Aarumugam Pilly’s hearers, (a mendicant Bramin,) named Soopparoya Pyer, of Valavannalloor, a town about ten miles west of Pondicherry, having heard Unitarianism, and being pleased with it, wished to read the Bible leisurely for his own satisfaction, and requested P. Aarumugam Pilly to give him a recommendation to me for that purpose. P. Aarumugam Pilly, after some hesitation, gave him a recommendatory letter, which he brought to me in the beginning of May last. He reads Tamil and English, lives at Blacktown, nearly three miles from Pursewaukum. Though he maintains himself and his aged mother, (who is blind) by begging, he comes to me four or five days in a week, and reads several chapters in English. He began from Genesis, going over the same in Tamil, and also has gone through several of my controversial tracts. He is well pleased with Unitarian Christianity; he now and then goes also to other denominations of Christians for information. In so doing, he fell into conversation once with an English missionary, who, to prove the Divinity of Christ, gave him St. John’s Gospel in Tamil, and bid him come to him again when he had gone through with it. Accordingly, he read a chapter every day with me, and I gave him the necessary explanation, and he does not think that that Gospel proves the Divinity of Christ. In his regular reading he has gone through Genesis and Exodus, and began with Leviticus, and after the Gospel of St. John, as far as the eighth chapter of the Acts. He is a very clean, well-behaved, and sensible young man, about twenty-four years of age. I think he has improved in his English, both in speaking and writing, since he came to me.

“In the above-mentioned town, Shecally, there are some people who are called Pariars, or low caste, some of them being cultivators themselves, and others employed by the rich cultivators in that town, but generally poor, having heard our religious sentiments from P. Aarumugam Pilly and his friends, are desirous to have a school there for their children, and further in-

structions for themselves ; they are not afraid of losing their caste by embracing a new religion. It is likely that we shall meet with success if we succeed in establishing a school there, and furnish it with a schoolmaster, who will both teach Christian principles, and the common education of reading, writing, and arithmetic. For this purpose, with my consent, P. Aarumugam Pilly has trained up Jacob Ramasawmy Pilly, of our number in Chillumbrum ; but his wife having been informed of her husband's intention of going to teach Pariars, would not agree to it, and that is given up at present. P. Aarumugam Pilly thinks that, as soon as it is convenient, it will be well to establish S. Karacadagalingum Pilly as schoolmaster there ; but as, through the opposition of P. Aarumugam Pilly's former friends, he cannot have children come to his school at Chillumbrum for education, so there are some of S. Karicadagalingum Pilly's relations at Shecally, who, it is feared, will not suffer him to set up a school there at all ; so where there is an opening for us to enter, we are impeded by those high caste people. They are, like the Pharisees of old, envious, who would neither enjoy the blessings of the Christian religion themselves, nor suffer others that are desirous to enjoy it. However, we will spare no pains, but try our best.

“ In this month, Adam Veerapen, one of the active members of our Society, going to Tinnevely with his employer, has taken above a hundred of our tracts. He takes an interest in disseminating our religious views. That being a Missionary station where many are made converts, and schools established, Scripture and theological tracts are circulated, and in some degrees inquiry excited. I hope my friend will be able to do some good there. Most of my brethren going to out-stations from Madras, are furnished with some of our tracts.

“ Our friends at St. Thomas's Mount and here are all pretty well. I have not heard anything particularly about our friends at Secunderbad for some time.

“ In this year I have printed four tracts in Tamil, the title-pages of them I inclose herewith ; No. 2, being a second edition of a tract addressed to his countrymen, the worshipers of three Moorthies, much enlarged and improved ; No. 30, being second edition of an Illustration of the Three Creeds, with some improvements and notes, brought under proper heads ; No. 32, also being

second edition with improvements. No. 31, is a translation of Mr. Wright's tract, Reasons for not being a Trinitarian. As soon as I can meet with an opportunity I shall forward copies of them. In revising and writing my notes afresh on the Acts of the Apostles, I have brought it to the end of the tenth chapter.

"*Conversion and Baptism.*—1 young woman, 2 married women, with their 2 boys, and 1 young man, received baptism; 1 elderly and 1 young Catholic joined us; 6 children were baptized.

"*Marriages.*—6 couples married.

"*Deaths.*—2 young lads and 2 children died.

"There are in our school at Pursewaukum, 8 boys and 2 girls Unitarian, 2 boys Roman Catholic, and 15 boys heathen—total 27: average attendance are from 20 to 25.

"In our school at St. Thomas's Mount, there are 1 boy and 1 girl Unitarian, 16 boys and 3 girls Roman Catholic, and 7 boys and 1 girl heathen; total, 29.

"By the blessing of God my health has been pretty good during the year, but from the middle of September last I have had the attacks of asthma repeatedly; but I hope with returning warm weather I shall be better: and I beg to present my heartfelt gratitude to my respectable friends and well-wishers of pure Christianity, for all their kindness towards me and my brethren.

"May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ bless all their exertions to promote truth and virtue among mankind, is the humble prayer of,

"Rev. Sir, your obedient Servant,

"WILLIAM ROBERTS."

"Pursewaukum, 31st Dec., 1834.

After laying before you this correspondence, your Committee have great satisfaction in mentioning that the sum of £50 has been forwarded to William Roberts, to enable him to commence printing his "Notes and Discourses on the Gospels and Acts in Tamil," and to encourage him in proceeding with it. They have in hand the further sum of £19, making a total of £69, a subscription towards that particular object—the result of advertisements in the Christian Reformer, calling the attention of our friends to it.

We hope the subscription will go liberally forward. Your Secretary has written to America, with a view to

obtain assistance from that quarter : and although it is some time since application was made, we yet hope that our American brethren will unite with us in the earnest support and encouragement of that rising cause, which is assuming more and more importance at Madras and its neighbourhood.

Our last communication from A. Chiniah, is dated Secunderabad, March 12th, 1834. He joyfully informs us that his little chapel, which had been threatened with destruction to make way for some public improvements, is not to be touched. He gives it as his opinion, that the work entitled "Notes and Discourses," &c., by W. Roberts, now much revised, and with many matters added, will be most valuable, of very great use, and a great blessing to the Tamil Unitarians, as there has been nothing of the kind as yet printed in Malabar.

"My brethren are continuing firm and steady in their belief. We have many hearers ; out of these there are some who acknowledge Unitarianism to be the most sublime, as that which was taught by Moses and the prophets, and confirmed by Christ and his Apostles, and attend our Divine worship ; but they do not openly avow themselves Unitarian Christians : it depends upon their situations, connexions, and circumstances ; these being generally in regiments, they are afraid of both superiors and equals, who, they fear, will oppose them in any way they can. However, we may sow the seed, but it remains to our Heavenly Father to give the increase.

"We would be happy to be informed when Mr. Joseph Roberts may be expected to leave England for his native country.

"I am happy to find that the Rajah Rammohun Roy attends your chapel ; we would be always happy to hear of his welfare.

"You say in your letter, 'I send you the sermon which was delivered at the opening of a chapel, and the last year's Report of the Association ;' these I have not received as yet.

"I herewith state the information you require in your letter, concerning the state of the school.

"I have in school 22 scholars ; they are now divided into three classes ; first class containing 7 boys, second class 10, and the third class 5 : the hours of school are from 6 to 9 A. M., when they are let go for their meals, and re-assemble at 10½ A. M. to 1 P. M. ; they are again

let go to their victuals, and re-commence at 3, and continue till 6 P. M. The first class go through reading the Bible, catechism, and various other books, printed in the Tamil language, with scriptural texts, also writing and arithmetic, (the writing among the natives is not on paper, but on cadjan leaves,) and likewise singing the hymns at Divine service. The second class reads the catechism, and various other Unitarian tracts, likewise arithmetic and writing on sand; and the third class are taught the alphabets in reading and writing on sand, and are obliged to learn as far as two syllables before they are entered in the second class.

“Unitarianism and Unitarians are so much disliked by all other sects, that, were it not a charity school, I suppose they would not send their children to it. The parents are very proud of the education given to their children; and the Unitarian faith being propounded to them clearly, it has become instilled in all the children. Though the parents are of other sects, the children admire the faith taught them, which is Unitarianism. There is likewise a charity Protestant school for natives, deriving the benefit from the gentlemen of this station. The natives of the faith of Unity are so few in number compared with other sects, that even should they put in any money for the support of the school, it would be but very little, they being poor; and the other sects being so numerous, are well able to support a school, &c. &c., at each station.

“I hope you will not forget to bless us with Milton’s *Last thoughts on the Trinity*, and Sir Isaac Newton’s *Historical Account of two notable Corruptions of Scripture*.

“Having nothing further to state at present, I beg to conclude. All the brethren join with myself in presenting our humble and hearty thanks, and salute the respectable English Unitarians as our benefactors and upholders of pure and true Christianity.

“I beg to state, for the information of the Society, that, in consequence of the many calls on our slender means, I have been obliged to discontinue, from December 1833, Mr. T. Robert’s salary, and he has since returned to Madras to his father, who is now a man much stricken in years, and may require some help. I intend that the duties devolve upon me and the native schoolmaster, and sincerely hope that, through care and perseverance, they will go on as before.”

ORDINATION OF THE REV. JAMES MALCOM.

ON Wednesday, the 2nd of September, the Committee of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, entrusted with the care of the newly erected Congregation of Carrickfergus, proceeded to the Ordination of the Rev. JAMES MALCOM; who had received a unanimous call to take upon him the pastoral office in that congregation. The attendance was numerous and highly respectable. The services were introduced by the Rev. F. BLAKELY, of Moneyrea; who preached an able and appropriate sermon. The Rev. WILLIAM GLENDY, of Ballycarry, ably explained and defended Presbyterian Government and Ordination. The call having been unanimously sustained, and the new minister having in a feeling and impressive address stated his views in accepting the office of minister, the Rev. ROBERT CAMPBELL offered up the Ordination prayer; and the Rev. J. SCOTT PORTER, in the absence of the Rev. Dr. MONTGOMERY, delivered an address to the minister and people on their mutual duties. In the evening, the members of the congregation, the officiating ministers, and several others, friends to the cause, dined together; and the evening was spent in a gratifying and appropriate manner. We understand it is in contemplation to take immediate steps for erecting a permanent House of Worship in Carrickfergus, to supersede the present temporary and inconvenient place of meeting: and we trust the members of this interesting society, will experience the liberal aid of the friends of pure and scriptural Christianity.

ORDINATION OF THE REV. ROBERT B. M'CLELLAND.

ON Wednesday, the 23d of September, the Rev. ROBERT B. M'CLELLAND, who had been unanimously chosen minister of the old and respectable Congregation of Dromore, was ordained to the pastoral office by the Remonstrant Presbytery of Armagh. On this interesting occasion, the Rev. WILLIAM CROZIER, of Redemon, introduced the service and preached: the Rev. JOHN MITCHELL delivered an address, explanatory of Presbyterian ordination: and the Rev. JAMES DAVIES, of Banbridge, delivered a charge to the newly elected minister, and to the people of the Congregation. The Congregation entertained the officiating ministers and others who had assisted on the occasion, at dinner in the evening, R. DICKSON, Esq. in the chair: and a vari-

ety of important and interesting sentiments were delivered by the different speakers, and received with demonstrations of cordial concurrence by a numerous and intelligent assemblage.

Intelligence.

CLOUGH CONGREGATION.

Parliament has been pleased, under the recommendation of His Majesty's Ministers, to raise the Congregation of Clough, (formerly in connexion with the Synod of Ulster, but now attached to the Presbytery of Antrim,) from the *second* to the *first Class* of Royal Bounty. This gratifying intelligence was announced some time since, in a letter from the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and the requisite vote has since passed the House of Commons. We are certain that this information will give much satisfaction to those who are acquainted with the persevering struggle which has been made by that Congregation and its worthy minister the Rev. DAVID WATSON, in defence of the rights of Conscience, and in opposition to a series of atrocious outrages against law, liberty, and justice, such as has seldom been paralleled. To these we may perhaps revert more in detail on a future occasion. In the mean time we may congratulate the respectable portion of the community on the disappointment experienced in this case by the disturbers of the public peace.

REMONSTRANT SYNOD AND PRESBYTERY OF ANTRIM.

His Majesty's Government have been pleased to separate the Agency of the *Regium Donum* for the two bodies above named, from that of the General Synod of Ulster; and to appoint the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, Agent for the distribution of His Majesty's Royal Bounty to the ministers of the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster. This arrangement we are certain will give sincere satisfaction to the persons affected by it; for although the gentleman who has hitherto discharged this office, deserves the utmost praise for his kindness and impartiality, circumstances may be imagined, in which the junction of the three agencies in one person would be peculiarly inconvenient.

CONGREGATION OF KILLINCHY.

This numerous and respectable Congregation has withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the General Synod of Ulster; and placed itself in connexion with the Remonstrant Synod, "for the protection of its religious liberty." The congregational resolution to that effect was carried by a majority of 219 to 10, after two weeks' notice from the pulpit; and the Remonstrant Synod, at a special meeting, agreed unanimously to take charge of the Congregation. Some objections to a part of the proceedings in this case, on purely technical grounds, have been advanced in the public papers, by the Rev. JOHN BARNETT, of Moneymore: to which the Rev. SAMUEL WATSON, minister of Killinchy, has published a most triumphant reply. We hope to be enabled to give full particulars in our next number.

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NOVEMBER, 1835.

VOL. VI.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 394.)

CHAPTER V.

V. 1, 2. And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.

See Brief Notes, Matt. viii.

Matthew mentions *two* demoniacs. Mark and Luke only *one*, who probably was the fiercer of the two. This man was raving mad, and imagined himself possessed by a legion of demons, whose organ he was compelled to be. When healed, he is said, (ver. 15.) to be in his right mind, which implies that his disorder was insanity.—See *Farmer on Dem.*

All those diseases which deprived the patient of the command of his understanding or limbs, were ascribed by the ancients to supernatural powers. The person afflicted was said to be possessed by a demon; and when he was cured, the spirit was said to be expelled and the man dispossessed. These phrases were so interwoven with the texture of language, that they were necessarily used by those who had very different ideas on the subject; and people spoke of persons possessed and dispossessed, as we speak of St. Vitus's dance, or St. Anthony's fire, without any belief in the power of these saints. Thus also men curse their stars, without any faith in astrology; and we say a man is a lunatic, without thinking of the influence of the moon. A philosopher, even when proving, that the sun has no motion round the earth, is obliged to speak of it as rising and setting, and being in different quarters of the heavens at different seasons. In like manner, our Saviour found a madman called a demoniac; a paralytic person, said to have a spirit of infirmity; one deaf and dumb, to be possessed with a deaf and dumb spirit; and he adopted the prevailing language through necessity. He must, otherwise, have been engaged in endless disputations, and all to no purpose; and have employed himself in correcting errors on medicine, metaphysics, and language, &c. to the neglect of the object of his mission. Questions which appear very important to us, may be mere trifles in the view of a superior intelligence.

V. 8. For he said unto him, come out of the man, thou unclean spirit, &c.

Luke (iv. 39.) says, that our Lord rebuked a fever, using the same words as when he rebuked the unclean spirit, though he did not consider the fever to be a person or intelligent agent. He used

the same form of speech, (Mark, iv. 39.) when he rebuked the wind and the sea ; saying, peace ; be still ; or rather, be silent ; or literally, be muzzled.

V. 9. And he asked him : What is thy name ? And he answered, saying : My name is Legion ; for we are many.

Our Lord may have intended to ask the name of the maniac, but he answered in the name of the demon.

“ Legion.” A Roman Legion consisted at first of 3,000, and afterwards of 6,000 soldiers.

This person having been always in the habit of imputing diseases of the mind to the operation of malignant spirits, readily transferred this impression to his own case, and even spoke in the name of the demons. Such persons always spoke and acted as lunatics would do in similar cases, and never as might be expected from spirits of superior power and intelligence. The cures were equally miraculous, whether the people understood the cause of the malady or not.

Being possessed with a spirit, and being mad, are synonymous ; as appears from John x. 20. “ He hath a devil and is mad.”

V. 10. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

This agrees with the natural partiality of the demoniac for his own country ; but not with the character of a demon. It is supposed however, by some commentators that particular genii were thought to preside over particular regions.

“ Them ” may refer to the Galileans ; see Brief Notes, Mark i. 24.

V. 20. And he departed and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him.

“ Decapolis ” was a district of Galilee of the Gentiles, so called from containing 10 cities. This province was called Galilee of the Gentiles, partly because the Canaanites had never been thoroughly expelled from those Northern parts, and partly because it contained those 20 cities which Solomon gave to Hiram king of Tyre. Hence Gadara and Gergesa were chiefly inhabited by Pagans.

V. 26. And had suffered many things of many physicians.

“ Had suffered.” The Greek word signifies only, that she had been attended and prescribed for, by many physicians.

V. 28. Healed of that plague, [Gr. scourge.]

V. 30. And Jesus immediately knowing [perceiving] in himself that virtue had gone out of him.

Virtue often signifies energy or efficacy ; and here salutary or medicinal power.

MARK—CHAP. VI.

V. 5. And he could there do no mighty work.

Jesus perceived that his miracles would produce no good effect on their minds; and therefore could not perform them there to advantage. The impossibility was moral, not physical; as we say, it is impossible for us to do a thing which we consider highly improper or unbecoming. For similar expressions see Mark, i. 45; John vii. 7.

V. 7. Unclean Spirits.

See Brief Notes, Matt. x.

Maniacs were said to be possessed by *unclean* spirits; because they were negligent of the rules of decency, and particularly of the pollutions and purifications of the Levitical Law.

V. 8. And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only: no scrip—no bread, &c.

The spirit of these precepts is, that they should not be anxious about the necessities of life; and the mention of a staff, scrip, &c. may be only proverbial, or metaphorical for them.

V. 9. But be shod with sandals.

They were only allowed "sandals," though shoes were fitter for travelling. The sandal was a wooden sole, which was fastened to the under part of the foot by straps.

V. 13. Anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

Grotius says, that this was an ancient custom among the Hebrews; and that oil denoted ease and joy. The cure was miraculous, whatever was the reason of this rite. See Luke, x. 34.

V. 14. See Brief Notes, Matt. xiv.

V. 19. A quarrel.

An inward grudge. See marginal reading.

V. 20. Observed him, [marginal reading, saved him,] and when he heard him, he did many things [recommended by him.]

V. 25. I will that thou give me, by and by, in a charger [in a large dish] the head of John the Baptist.

"I will;" this is the regular neuter verb, and not the auxiliary, which is irregular. These are very often confounded in the Gospels; thus Matt. viii. 2. "If thou wilt [willest] thou canst make me clean;" see Matt. xiii. 28; xv. 28; xvii. 4, &c.

"Baptist;" the baptizer, a title, not a proper name.

V. 27. The king sent an executioner.

"Executioner," one of his guards. The original is a latin word. Mark is supposed to have written his Gospel in Rome.

V. 29. And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

These events seem to have taken place while the apostles were travelling on their first mission, and to have been the immediate cause of their return, for Mark connects these circumstances in his account. It may also have been a reason for Jesus withdrawing with his apostles into the desert of Bethsaida. The time for his departure from this world was not then come; neither was Galilee the place where his death and resurrection were to take place: nor was the private execution of John the mode appointed for the termination of Jesus' existence on earth.

V. 32. And they departed into a desert place.

"A desert place" belonging to the city of Bethsaida, which was subject to Philip and independant of Herod.

V. 40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

The word translated *ranks* denotes a small plat, such as a square flower-bed in a garden.

V. 48. And would have passed by them.

See Luke, xxiv. 28. Thus he gave the disciples time to view him distinctly and composedly; and Peter opportunity to address him.

V. 53. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesareth.

We are not always to suppose that in such cases they passed from one side to the other: they often sailed, over some creek or bay, from one town to another. This will account for the speed with which the people sometimes followed them by land; see v. 53.

Some readers may be assisted in tracing the perambulations and voyages of our Lord, by being told, that there is a strong resemblance between the sea of Galilee and the lough of Strangford, in the County of Down, in length, breadth, and geographical position. Several towns also on the shore of each lake are similarly situated. Beginning from Strangford, Killileagh represents Tiberias, and Killinchy, Cinneroth and Gennesareth; Comber corresponds with Bethsaida, and Newtonards with Capernaum; Chorazin, called also Bethsaida, was at the head of the lake to the east of Capernaum; Kirkcubbin may stand for Gergesa, and Portaferry, for Magdala, in the neighbourhood of which was Dalmanutha; and Ballynabinch agrees in situation with Nazareth. The channel also by which Strangford lough communicates with the sea resembles the river Jordan; Capernaum, which was situated at the mouth of the Upper Jordan, which discharges itself into the lake, was the residence of Matthew, whose business it was to take toll from those who passed the bridge or ferry to and from the countries on each side of the river and the lake.

Cesarea Philippi stood in the direction of Bangor.

MARK—CHAP. VII.

V. 2. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say with unwashen) hands, they found fault.

The word rendered *defiled* literally signifies *common*. It was quite in the Jewish idiom to oppose *common* and *holy*; the most usual signification of the latter word in the Old Testament being, separated from common and devoted to sacred use. Their meals were (1 Tim. iv. 5) "sanctified by the word of God and prayer;" and were not, therefore, to be touched with unhallowed hands. As Mark wrote his Gospel in a pagan country, and for the use of Gentile converts, it was proper to add the explanation *unwashen* to the epithet *defiled*, which might have otherwise been misunderstood.

V. 3. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not.

Oft, or diligently; in the original, "with the fist: up to the elbow."
Marginal Reading.

The Jews, when they washed, held up their hands, and contracting their fingers, received the water that was poured on them, till it ran down their arms, which they washed up to their elbows. (This is one meaning of the original word.) 'To wash [with the fist,' therefore, is to wash with great care.—*Dr. Macknight*.

V. 4. And when they come from the market, except they wash they eat not, &c.

The following is Dr. Campbell's translation of this passage: "For the Pharisees eat not until they have washed their hands, by pouring a little water on them; and if they come from the market, by dipping them."

"Tables," rather *couches*, on which they reclined at meals.

V. 9. And he said unto them: Full well ye reject [frustrate, marginal reading,] the commandment of God.

Campbell's translation is, "Ye judge well, continued he, in annulling." &c. This is spoken ironically.

V. 10. See Brief Notes, Matt. xv.

V. 11. It is Corban (that is to say a gift.)

This is another instance in which Mark interprets a Hebrew phrase to accommodate his Gentile readers.

Corban signified any sacred offering. It was adopted by the later Jews, as a proverbial form of vow: thus, they said, "Corban whatsoever I shall eat with thee;" which rendered it sacrilege both for the maker of the vow, and for him to whom it was made, to eat together; because, by this form, the thing so to be eaten became a sacrifice. But nothing was instantly consecrated by the vow, for it could not take place till the two began to eat together.

Agreeably to this, Campbell translates the passage thus: "But ye maintain, 'If a man say to his father or mother, 'Be it corban, (that

is, devoted) whatever of mine shall profit thee,' he must not henceforth do aught for his father or his mother."

V. 11. By whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me.

This may be expressed more fully thus: "That is *corban*, whatever it be, by which thou mightest be profited by me."—*Campbell*.

V. 16. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

"To hear" often signifies *to hearken* or *attend to*. In this sense it is very frequently used in the Gospels. In this text it has both meanings.

V. 19. Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats.

It entereth not into his heart, but into his belly, whence all impurities in the victuals pass into the sink.—*Campbell*.

V. 22. An evil eye.

Envy or jealousy.

V. 26. The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation.

This woman is called by Matthew *Canaanitish*; here a *Syrophenician* and a *Greek*. By birth she was of *Syrophenicia*; by descent a *Canaanite*; and by her religion a *Greek*.

V. 27. It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto dogs.

This accords with what he said to the disciples, Matt. xv. 24.

V. 31. He came into Galilee, through the midst of the coasts [borders] of Decapolis.

He may have passed the Jordan above the lake of Galilee.

"Decapolis" lay on the east side of the river and the lake.

MARK—CHAP. VIII.

V. 15. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xvi.

"Leaven" is taken for the diffusion both of good and bad principles. See 1 Cor. v. 6 and Luke xii. 1.

V. 24. I see men as trees walking.

That is, either indistinctly, not discerning their form; or, they appeared larger and higher to him than formerly, as objects do through a mist.

"I see men, whom I distinguish from trees only by their walking."—*Campbell*.

V. 27. Cesarea Philippi.

This was a city built by Philip, in honour of Cesar, near the springs of the Jordan.

V. 29. Thou art the Christ.

"The Christ" signifies *the anointed*, a title given to kings and priests in the Old Testament.

The word *Christ* was as much an appellative as the word *Baptist*: yet our translators, who always say *the Baptist*, often avoid saying *the Christ*. In English the article *the* is never prefixed to the name of a man, though it is invariably prefixed to a name of office. Whilst he remained on earth, *Jesus* was his common name, and *Christ* was understood as the denomination of dignity or office. The term *Christ*, though originally an appellative, was, after his ascension, superadded as a proper name, because the term *Jesus* was so common a name among the Jews.

V. 34. Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

My followers must deny themselves to all worldly gratifications; and even submit to death rather than deny me or abandon the profession of the Gospel.

This comparative mode of interpretation is the key to many of our Lord's hard sayings; thus, "*If a man hate not his father and mother, he is not worthy of me*," is interpreted by another text, "*If a man love his father or mother more than me, he is not worthy of me*." In like manner, when it is said, "All manner of sin shall be forgiven, but the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven," it may be meant, that this sin is less pardonable than any other. Again, when it is said that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, the meaning is only, that he loved Jacob *more* than Esau; or simply that he preferred Jacob: God never shewed any signs of hatred to Esau.

Taking up the cross, and bearing the cross, allude to the Roman custom of making criminals carry their cross, or rather its cross bar, to the place of execution.

V. 35. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xvi.

"Will save his life;" rather, is desirous of saving his life.

V. 37. Or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

"Exchange," Gr. ransom. "Soul," life.—*Newcome. Doddridge.*

V. 38. This adulterous and sinful generation, &c.

"Adulterous." As the union between God and his peculiar people is often expressed, in the Old Testament, by the state of matrimony; sins of idolatry, and transgressions of the divine law, are sometimes classed in Scripture language, with the infidelity and guilt of adultery. Here, therefore, it may signify ungodly or irreligious; or, as *Harwood* renders it, debauched or profligate.

"With the holy angels." The word translated "*angels*" signifies, both in Hebrew and Greek, *messengers*, whether divine or human. The former are styled ministering spirits; thus, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee."—"Angels came and ministered unto him."—"The son of man shall send forth his

angels."—"He shall give me more than twelve legions of angels." It sometimes signifies the angel of the covenant acting in the name of the Almighty, as in Acts. vii, 30. 31.

The word, when applied to human messengers, is used in many different senses. Thus the messengers sent by John to Christ are in the Greek called angels, Luke vii. 24; and also the messengers whom our Lord sent before him into the Samaritan villages, Luke ix. 52. The Baptist is denoted by the same appellation, Luke vii. 27; Mal. iii. 1. The phrase "on account of the angels," 1 Cor. xi. 10, is understood of the spies who were sent into the assemblies of the Christians; and the messengers sent by Joshua, are in the Greek called angels, James ii. 25; and these same persons are denominated spies in Heb. xi. 31.

The word also signifies a teacher of religion. The prophet Haggai (i. 13) is, in the original, called the angel of the Lord. Paul says of the Galatians, "Ye received me as an angel of God, even as Jesus Christ." The expression "seen of angels," is understood, by Dr. Macknight and others, as importing only, seen by the apostles; for the word apostle has the same meaning with messenger or angel. The angels of the seven churches of Asia, in the Revelations, signify the principal ministers in those churches.

It sometimes denotes the inanimate agents of Providence, or Providence itself. Thus "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." Again; "an evil spirit (or melancholy distemper) from the Lord troubled Saul"; it was removed by music. "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire," Ps. civ. 4, that is, who maketh the winds his messengers, and flaming fire or lightning his minister or servant. The author of Hebrews (i. 7.) applies this text differently. In Ps. lxxviii. 49, hail and thunder are termed evil angels, that is, destructive messengers. The angel of the Lord smote Sennacherib's army; or, as it is expressed in another place, "Behold I will send a blast upon him;" probably the Simoom, or a deadly wind. 2 Kings xix. 35; Isaiah xxxvii. 36. "He sent evil angels on the Egyptians:" these were the plagues of Egypt. In 1 Chron. xxi. 14. 15, a pestilence is termed the angel of the Lord. The angel of the Lord which smote Herod, Acts xii. 23, may have been the disease of which he died.

In accommodation to the opinions that then prevailed, angels are spoken of as guardian spirits or genii, attached to each individual, Matt. xviii. 10; Acts xii. 15.

The Law is said to be the word spoken or ordained by angels, in or by the hand of a mediator, that is, Moses, see Heb. ii. 2; Gal. iii. 19; Deut. v. 5.

MARK—CHAP. IX.

V. 1. There be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

This is understood to mean the destruction of Jerusalem, which took place within 40 years.

V. 2. See Brief Notes, Matt. xvii.

V. 17. I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit, &c.

It appears by the symptoms, that the disease of this child was epilepsy. He appears also to have been a deaf-mute.

V. 25. Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

If the spirit had been deaf, our Lord would not have spoken to him, nor could the spirit have heard him; and if dumb, he could not have "cried." It was the patient only that was dumb and deaf.

The Jews prefixed *Spirit* before any quality ascribed to a person; such as, Spirit of Fear, Spirit of Infirmary, &c.

V. 31. The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men.

The present tense is here used for the future, indicating the certainty and proximity of the event that was to happen. In like manner, our Saviour says, "My body which *is* broken," and "my blood which *is* shed." See John v. 25.

V. 37. Whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me but him that sent me.

"Receiveth not" only me, but him, &c.—or, receiveth not so much me, as him that sent me.

V. 40. For he that is not against us, is on our part.

This seems to be at variance with Matthew xii. 30, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad;" but proverbs used opposite ways are true, according to the subject of which they are asserted.

In Matthew (xii. 30) he may speak of their intention or goodwill, and here of the effect of such conduct.

V. 43, 44. It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

See Brief Notes, Matt. v.

"Hell," Greek, *The valley of Hinnom*. It was there that the cruel sacrifices of children were made by fire to Moloch, the Ammonitish idol, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. The place was also called *Tophet*, 2 Kings xxiii. 10; and that, as is supposed, from the noise of drums: *Toph* signifying a drum, a noise raised on purpose to drown the cries of the helpless infants. This place came to be an emblem of hell; and hence, *Tophet* to signify the place of future punishment.

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." See Isaiah lxvi. 24, "They shall go forth and look upon the carcases of men that have transgressed against me. For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." Our Saviour refers to this text, and expresses the punishment of the wicked by the worm which there preyed on the carcases, and the fire which consumed the

wretched victims. These expressions were in use among the Jews before our Saviour's time. See Ecclus. vii. 17; Judith xvi. 17.

V. 49. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

As every sacrifice under the Law was salted with salt (Lev. ii. 15) to purify and make it holy; so every one that is to be saved, shall be salted or purified.

V. 50. Salt is good &c.

See Brief Notes, Matt. v.

"Wherewith will you season it?" that is, "by what means will you restore its original savour?" Suffer not your zeal for religion to lose its force and vigour, for if it does, it cannot be revived. Have zeal within yourselves, "and have peace one with another."

Salt was the emblem of wisdom and virtue. Its well-known effects in preventing corruption from taking place, and in communicating a pleasing relish to almost every kind of animal and vegetable food, render the metaphorical use of salt peculiarly significant and happy.—*Hewlett*.

PARTY NAMES.

I have adopted an ominous title; but I have no intention to write a party paper. My object is rather to exhibit the pernicious consequences of adopting factious or sectarian designations, of whatever kind. I must, however, commence by frankly acknowledging, that a name is essential to both the formation and continuance of every combination of individuals. It is their nominal essence. It is, I believe, impossible to form a notion of a society without a name. The members might, perhaps, feel a mutual sympathy among themselves; but they could neither speak of themselves, nor be spoken of by others, without some distinguishing appellation. They would resemble a nameless man. If they refused every other designation, they might be styled the "Anonymous," a name that was actually adopted by a society in Dublin; or have some ludicrous epithet imposed upon them by the public. These would, at least, afford no pretence for faction and party spirit.

A Name then is indispensable to union. A few intelligent persons might communicate with each other, and find that they agreed upon certain principles, but could not operate as a body without a name; and their followers would be a rope of sand, prone rather to repulsion than attraction or cohesion. They could neither understand one another, nor tell what they were. It may

admit of a question, whether this would not be the very best state of things that can be imagined. Men of sense would understand one another, and might reason and act together; and the absurd and ignorant people, who form the body of the sect or club, could do neither. They must remain in their individual insignificance; neither capable of talking of what they did not understand, nor of combining to annoy their neighbours—unknown and unknown. A Name brings them out of their obscurity, conceals their ignorance, and enables them to indulge their prejudices and antipathies. It is a knot which binds these unconnected rods together into one bundle, gives them strength, and brings them into notice; and even confers importance. It also conceals their internal differences, and marks, and points out their opponents as objects for their senseless and malignant aversion. Their contention becomes hostility between two Names. Knowledge and reason are unnecessary,—a great accommodation to persons of their character. Without separate titles, two parties might live together in perfect harmony, neither knowing that any difference subsisted between them, nor caring whether or not. While they are in this peaceful state, call one party Calvinists and the other Arminians, and the war begins; though neither has acquired any additional knowledge of Calvin or Arminius. Christians or Christ-ians is a title adopted by a society that has recently arisen in America. This may not be considered as a party name, since it is applicable to all parties; yet even this appellation, whether so intended or not, does actually operate as a party distinction equally with others, and may even be considered as a presumptuous sectarian assumption, and invidious distinction.

This factious spirit dissolves all the ties of kindred and friendship, and extinguishes all respect for talent and learning, approved piety, and distinguished virtue. Children lose their affection for their parents and for one another. Old friends look upon each other with distaste and suspicion. The meanest and most ignorant partizan is valued above the most pious Christian. Even in questions depending purely upon critical learning, there is no more attention paid to the opinion of men acknowledged to excel in such points, than to the mere sciolist who takes the favourite or popular side of the argument. Such a state of society some of us have witnessed, and in some respects it exists at this day.

Many diversities of opinion have prevailed for generations, without producing any animosity, till they got a name ; but as soon as parties assumed a title, an interminable contest commenced. Without this it would never begin ; because individuals would not know who was of their faction or the opposite one, or feel any thing irritating in their several opinions even if they did know them. Many who differed in particulars, would find that they agreed in general, and would live together in concord ; till in an evil hour some ill disposed person should point out their difference, and give them corresponding appellations. Before this, their partial agreement would mitigate their dissensions ; and when those of the same party found, that there was some discord even among themselves, they might be better disposed toward those who differed from them all. Indeed few would so understand their points either of concord or discord as to combine among themselves, or array themselves against others. But, when once men are enrolled under a Name, subordinate differences in the same party are overlooked or suppressed, and they all coalesce in hostility against others who perhaps disagree with them less than they do themselves. For this end partisans think it necessary to adopt all the opinions of the party in the lump.

As then we cannot reject or condemn party distinctions altogether, so neither should we be too tenacious of them ; but having these ill consequences before our eyes, we should guard against their taking hold of our affections, or inflaming our passions. This caution is necessary to natural as well as moral philosophers, to metaphysicians as well as politicians, to chemists and geologists as well as divines.

I have been led into this train of thought by the present state of things in this country ; but I shall be cautious, while I tread on the ashes, not to kindle the embers.

This passion for enrolling themselves under factious names, has existed among all professions, and in all countries ; and the bad effects of it have been experienced in all, as far as my knowledge extends. I am not indeed aware of any pernicious consequences resulting from the attachment of the Greek philosophers to the heads of their respective schools, beyond a war of words ; nor even from their political factions. The

bigotry and cruelty of the Pharisees and Sadducees, among the Jews, form a prominent feature in their history, between the conclusion of the Old Testament and the commencement of the New ; when the Herodians were added to the number. St. Paul complains, that even in the Apostolic church of Corinth, a factious spirit and party names had arisen, and that there were contentions among them ; one saying, I am of Paul ; another, I am of Apollos ; and others, I am of Cephas ; and a fourth party, I am of Christ. That this was purely the effect of party names is evident, for no other material difference existed among these holy and exemplary men, nor in their attachment to their Lord and Master. During the Roman Republic, the people had something more important than names to quarrel about ; but after they had lost their liberty, or, as the Satirist chooses to express it, the power of selling their votes, (a phrase which well describes the use that our own people make of their freedom) and when the Roman confined his wishes to victuals and horse races, they indulged their party spirit by addicting themselves to the Circus. The spectators favoured one or other colour worn by the jockies or charioteers, as humour or caprice inclined them. "It was not the swiftness of the horses," says Pliny, "nor the art of the men that attracted them, but merely the dress." "If," says he, "in the midst of the course, the different parties were to change habits, their different favourers would change sides. Such mighty charms, such wondrous power is there in a tunic ; and this in the sentiments not only of the vulgar, but even in the opinion of some grave personages." In the time of Justinian, 30,000 people are said to have lost their lives at Constantinople, in a tumult raised by contention among the partisans of the several colours.

The enmity existing between individuals of rival nations, which grows into what has been absurdly and profanely called natural hostility, is of the same class ; and many national wars can boast of no better origin.

In the fifteenth century, Nominalists and Realists, whose quarrels may literally be ascribed to differences about Names, had frequently recourse to hostile and dangerous weapons ; and battles were the consequences of a philosophical question, which neither side understood. About the same time, similar contests arose in

universities, between the advocates for different modes of pronouncing Greek, under the names of Greeks and Trojans.

Among the English factions, Whig and Tory are pre-eminent. While most other titles are adopted by the party, or bestowed by their friends, these had their origin in hostility and contempt. This appears by their derivation. Burnet, who was a Scotch clergyman before he was an English bishop, deduces the term Whig from Whiggam, a word used by the Western Scots in driving their horses. In 1648 when he was a boy, they rose and marched to Edinburgh to put down the Royalists, and in contempt were called Whiggameres, and for shortness, Whigs; whence all who opposed the Court received that appellation, and from them it passed into England. Jameson, in his Scotch Dictionary, interprets it by "an acetous liquor subsiding from sour cream;" and adds, "perhaps from Whiggam, a term used in driving horses." These native authorities may be considered conclusive. Johnson also derives it from a Saxon word signifying Whey. Tory was the name for Irish Rogues and Rapparees. Johnson, while he contemptuously defines Whig, "the name of a faction," describes a Tory to be "one who adheres to the ancient Constitution of the State, and the Apostolical Hierarchy of the Church of England." Swift, though a bitter Tory, is more impartial. "Whosoever," says he, "has a true value for Church and State, should avoid the extremes of Whig for the sake of the former, and the extremes of Tory on account of the latter." Neal, on the contrary, describes the Whigs as "firm to the Constitution and liberties of their country." "Their clergy," says he, "were men of large and liberal principles, and friendly to toleration; and the laity were for confining the Royal Prerogative within the compass of law, for which reason they were charged with republican principles, and called Whigs or sour milk. But the Tories or High Churchmen were for setting the King above law, and adopted a Mahometan principle, under the name of Passive Obedience and Non-resistance. They were persons of lax and dissolute morals. Their adversaries, therefore, gave them the name of Tories, a name first given to Irish robbers, who lived upon plunder, and were prepared for every daring and villainous enterprize." So for Neal. Even

these wise men were tainted with party spirit, and a partiality for party names. Agreeably to these authorities, the word Whig was introduced into England about the time when the Scots marched into that country to assist the Long Parliament; and Tory, I suppose, when Charles introduced an Irish army. However this may be, they did not become Names of regular factions in the State, till 1681, in the reign of Charles II., on occasion of the Exclusion Bill.

Of all the countries in the world, there is not one that ever exhibited the injurious consequences, and the confusion of ideas which arise from party names, in a more striking and lamentable point of view, than our own. Upon our innumerable religious dissensions, it would be painful to enlarge. Those of them which are mixed up with politics, have been the bane of our prosperity for a long series of years. It is not unreasonable to think, that the multitudes who are engaged in them, are generally influenced by a Name, and are totally incapable of deciding on the important and intricate controversies, civil and theological, in which they take a furious part.

But beside these, there is a constant succession of feuds, kept alive solely by some local or family prejudice, and dependent merely upon the name of the family or district.

When the causes of riot and bloodshed are wanting, our unhappy countrymen in the South, through mere restlessness, and impatience of peace, and inactivity, devise some fanciful term to denote the contending parties, and engage with the same fury as if there were a real cause of quarrel. Many of these have risen and sunk into oblivion, at least, fallen out of my memory, within a few years. I recollect one peculiarly ridiculous. It appeared that the peace of the country had been disturbed by two parties, who choose for party names, as if in ridicule of all such distinctions, the denomination of Magpies and Black Hens.

A few years ago I read an account of a conflict yet more absurd and tragical. In a bulk, on the Thames, crowded with Irish convicts, they privately cut up their hammocks and beds, twisted the materials into ropes, loaded them with bullets, and commenced a furious affray, in which, I think, some were mortally wounded. When quelled by a superior power, it was found, that it

was a conflict between Leinster men and Munster men. There lately occurred a similar instance, in which the convicts converted iron hoops into swords, and engaged in a bloody affray with their fellow prisoners and countrymen, for the honour of their respective provinces.

If the principles and facts adduced in this article were more generally attended to, this might have some effect in mitigating the distractions now existing among high and low, arising from the indulgence of a factious spirit and the adoption of party names. I remember an old gentleman who concentrated this wish into a chemical toast,—“May our present ferments produce rectified spirits.”

NEMO.



CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE CHURCH OF GENEVA, AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SCOTLAND.

THE following admirable letter has not yet been published, as far as we know, in any of the British journals or periodicals. We are indebted for it to a friend who obtained a copy of it in Geneva. The occasion which produced it was as follows:—

The venerable company of Pastors in Geneva, addressed one of their circular letters to the Church of Scotland, inviting the General Assembly to send deputies to the recent tri-centenary festival celebrated in that city. This polite invitation met with a return that was very uncourteous, to use the mildest term. This incivility on the part of the Scottish clergy, will not surprise those who are acquainted with the history of the Presbyterian Church. They will recollect that Geneva, more than a century ago, disencumbered herself of the yoke of human authority in matters of faith, refused submission to formulas and confessions, which imposed on human reason and conscience a bondage as heavy and unscriptural as that from which the Reformers had emancipated themselves, and declared her adherence to the Bible alone, as the only infallible standard of religious truth. Such a vindication of religious liberty is by no means pleasing to the Presbyterian Churches which retain those formulas and confessions, and erect upon them their machinery of ecclesiastical domination. Accordingly, wherever this freedom has been asserted, it has been viewed with great jealousy,

and even hostility by such churches. Attempts have often been made to crush it by persecution; and when these have failed, it has been assailed by misrepresentations, calumnies, evil surmisings, and railing accusations. What numerous and deplorable instances of all these have been presented to us in the recent history of the Presbyterian Church in our own country!

The invitation from Geneva was couched in very respectful and fraternal terms, and merited a courteous reply, at least, from a society of Christian gentlemen, such as the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was presumed to be. Their answer, however, was coarse and unmannerly in the mode of its transmission, heartless and unkind in its language, and replete with insulting and injurious insinuations. First, it is pretty broadly hinted therein, that the Pastors in Geneva have “thrown off the yoke of divine authority, and rejected the infallible oracles of the living God.” This is a tremendous charge against a Christian church! What did the General Assembly mean by it? They know right well that the Holy Scriptures are scrupulously adhered to by the Church of Geneva, and that the authority of the Sacred Volume is zealously maintained, and constantly appealed to by her Pastors, as the only unerring fountain of truth, and the only infallible rule of faith and conduct. What then is that “yoke of divine authority,” which she is charged by them with having thrown off? What are those “infallible oracles of the living God,” which she is accused by them as having rejected? It is evident that these terms cannot be intended by the members of the Church of Scotland to apply to the *Holy Scriptures*, because they well know that these were not thrown off or rejected by the Pastors and people of Geneva. The terms can, therefore, apply only to those things which are rejected by the Genevese,—that is, *confessions* and *formulas*, the inventions of uninspired men. And can it be that the General Assembly of Scotland, so respectable a council of Christian ministers in a reformed church, do seriously apply such awful words, as “the yoke of divine authority,”—and, “the infallible oracles of the living God,” to the formulas and confessions that were drawn up by the Westminster, Helvetic, or Augsburg divines? Surely no human composition, the work of uninspired men, ought to be designated, whatever may be its

merit, by such elevated titles, as belong only to the unquestionable revelations of the divine will. Whatever may be the veneration with which the members of the Church of Scotland regard these formulas, we confess we are shocked to hear such epithets used in reference to any human compositions. We loudly reprobate the application of such language to any uninspired production; and we have no hesitation in pronouncing it, to savour strongly of profanity and impiety.

In another passage of this memorable reply from the Church of Scotland, a hope is expressed, that "the day is not far distant when Jesus Christ will be preached in all the churches of Switzerland, as the *Son of God*; and when a system of Christianity, pure and rational, because scriptural, will be taught in all their schools of divinity, and published in all their pulpits." Full well does the Assembly know, that in all the Swiss churches, Jesus Christ is preached as the *Son of God*:—full well do they know, that *Scriptural Christianity alone* is taught in Geneva, and that the system of her divinity is pure and rational, founded upon the Bible alone, unmixed with human inventions. What then did the Assembly intend, by the expression of their hope, that such preaching *will* take place? Evidently to insinuate that there is no such preaching or teaching in Geneva *at present*: an insinuation which they knew to be altogether without foundation, and which, therefore, fastens upon them the charge of intentionally accusing their brethren falsely:—an odious charge, which bigotry and intolerance are apt to incur, without scruple or compunction!*

* The following is one out of numberless instances of these false accusations. Mr. Haldane, of Edinburgh, a gentleman of the highest character for *Orthodoxy*, states in a pamphlet, that a Mr. Wilson, who resided some time in Geneva, "had conversations with M. Chenevière, Professor of Divinity in the College, and one of the Pastors in the city; that he found M. Chenevière, an avowed Socinian, violent, and intractable; and that he was terrified by M. Chenevière's attacks on spiritual religion." From this the reader would suppose, that Mr. Wilson had frequent interviews with this formidable Professor of Geneva. But what must be his surprise to learn, that these gentlemen *never even saw each other*, and that the whole story is a falsehood! Mr. Wilson indeed, called on Professor Chenevière with an introductory letter from a friend, but the Professor was not at home. M. Chenevière returned the visit, but Mr. Wilson had left Geneva. What can such persons mean by such

In conclusion, the Assembly implores God, that the spirit,—not of that divine Master, the meek and peaceable Jesus, who alone is the way, the truth, and the life,—not of his inspired apostles, who have left their unerring directions in the sacred volume,—but that the spirit of *Luther, Calvin, Farel, and Knox*, may pervade and animate the meeting at Geneva;—men, who whatever might be their zeal and their piety, are by no means to be held up, considering their contentions and irritations, as correct, much less infallible, directors either of faith or of practice. Finally, the Assembly declines the invitation, expressing regret that they cannot send any deputation to the jubilee, but promising that they will pray at home for the Church of Geneva. Pray for the Church of Geneva! Alas! how much more need have they to pray for themselves, that the God who worketh great marvels, would soften their hearts, forgive their uncharitableness, pardon their false testimony, and infuse into their bosoms some portion of the benevolent and kindly spirit of the Redeemer!

The General Assembly had prefixed to their effusion, the usual form of address from one body of divines to another, viz:—*Rev. Brethren*. But this was considered as too courteous towards a church that cleaved to the Bible alone, and that was described as an apostate for having had the audacity to impugn “the divine authority” of the beloved confessions, and to refuse to admit them as “the infallible oracles of the living God.” Accordingly, a Mr. Collins, who, it appears, was a lay elder in the General Assembly,—worthily discharging his function,—called the attention of that Rev. body to this momentous affair; and after a speech well adapted to the occasion, moved that the term “*Sirs*,” should be substituted in place of the more cordial and kind appellation, “*Brethren*.” The question on this important alteration, was actually put by the Moderator, and carried unanimously!

In what a wretched and humiliating light has the Established Church of Scotland exhibited herself on this interesting occasion, in the face of Protestant Europe! And what a painful sensation must her bigo-

representations? Can they possibly believe, that the service of the God of truth is promoted by the invention and propagation of falsehood?

ted and calumnious letter have produced in that numerous assembly of enlightened divines, which met at Geneva, the representatives of almost all the reformed churches in the world ! Rude and insulting as the letter itself was to the Pastors of Geneva, the transmission of it was attended with even a greater degree of coarseness and indelicacy, which astonished that polished and refined people. It was not only sent *without a date* ; but copies of it had been printed and widely disseminated in the British Islands and on the Continent, for several weeks before it was officially received in Geneva ; as if for the purpose of giving currency to the evil insinuations it contained, and of creating such a prejudice against Geneva, as might prevent other Protestant communities from uniting in the celebration of their festival. To such mean treachery and contemptible artifices, may the minds of learned divines be reduced by intolerance and bigotry, even in churches that call themselves reformed !

The Geneva periodicals readily inserted the letter of the Church of Scotland, and left it to speak for itself. One of them, indeed, used this brief and pithy remark.

“ This sample of intolerant language and spirit, may well pass without comment ; pity, however, remains, when criticism becomes superfluous.”

The following is the answer which was returned by the Venerable Company.

“ Reply of the Venerable Company to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.”

“ To the Moderator and the other reverend members of the Church of Scotland.”

“ Geneva, July 10, 1835.”

“ Gentlemen, and highly honoured Brethren,

“ The Company of Pastors has received the letter *without a date*, which you have done them the honour of recently addressing to them on the subject of the approaching Jubilee of the Reformation in our country. *They were already acquainted with its contents by means of various Scottish and French journals, which had published it some weeks beforehand.*

“ We can readily conceive, and your letter affords us proof, that many circumstances which have occurred among us, must have been very imperfectly known in your churches. Publications and reports which have

issued from your country, have spread abroad with profusion, statements either garbled or entirely false. Still, gentlemen, without in the least denying the diversity of doctrinal interpretations, which may be found among us, as in almost all ages, and in every church in which the Bible has been made the subject of sincere and personal examination,—we are astonished and grieved that you have been induced so readily to lend belief to so many strange imputations, against which we owe it to ourselves to protest.—No, Gentlemen and highly honoured Brethren,—*at Geneva the infallible and immutable oracles of the living God, have not lost their authority: there is not one of our pulpits, in which Christ is not preached as the Son of God: the faith which gives us the victory over the world is scriptural as well as rational:—and the Bible,—the only ground which advocates of the Reformation can give for their hope,—is always the pillar on which we rest our church with confidence and courage!*

“It is true that on this very account, we tremble at the thought of giving to human systems the infallible authority which is due to divine revelation alone. Having submitted ourselves to the Bible, we could not, as Reformers and disciples of Christ, refuse the title of Christian, to those who from the depth of a pure heart submit themselves to it, as we have done; and although we have sometimes been obliged to punish perseverance in rending the tie of discipline in our church, yet faithful to this principle, we have always been careful not to confound doctrines with acts.

“This principle, now long established and tested by experience among us, has been the occasion of violent attacks against our clergy, and of proceedings but little fraternal; but we have been cautious not to abandon it notwithstanding. We are the servants of the divine head of the church, not of men. Of his word alone we desire to be the guardians.

“Thanks to this principle, Gentlemen and highly honoured Brethren, we can bless the memory of the illustrious Reformers of the North and of the South, *without converting their authority into a papal yoke, similar to that which they broke.* We learn from these eminent servants of God, not to allow ourselves to be diverted by the exactions of men, from the exclusive respect to which the Bible is entitled.

“Thanks to this principle, we can without any bitterness in our hearts, *give the title of BRETHREN, to those who refuse it to us.*

“Thanks to this principle, in fine, whatever be the manifestations of which we may be the object, we will celebrate our solemn festival of Jubilee, with our eyes fixed upon the author and finisher of our faith, with souls filled with thankfulness for his mercy and zeal for his glory. We earnestly entreat of God for this great epoch, *a better spirit than that of the immortal Luther, Calvin, Knox, and Farel ; namely, the spirit of JESUS CHRIST ; without which, even with the approbation of men, we should only be instruments of error.*

“And now, Gentlemen, and highly honoured Brethren, we thank you for your prayers, and the benevolent intentions of which you give us assurance :—Accept that of our fraternal and respectful devotion.

“Signed in the name of the Venerable Company, and by its order,

“J. CHOISY, *Professor.*

STATEMENT OF FACTS RELATIVE TO THE CONGREGATION OF KILLINCHY.

IN the year 1825, the people of Killinchy congregation were numerous, respectable, and contented with their minister and each other ; living together like brethren in unity, till circumstances brought about occurrences over which neither they nor their pastor had any control. An unhappy spirit of dictation arose in the Synod of Ulster about the year 1827, when a majority of that body insisted on its respective members taking a *Test*, contrary to all law, and to all precedent in the presbyterian church ; and implicating in its result, a number of worthy and highly respectable characters, who conscientiously differed in opinion on some mysterious subjects. In the year 1828 also, those celebrated *Overtures* were passed, (and that in a manner contrary to the express laws of the Body,) which trenched so deeply on the Christian rights both of ministers and people : restricting the latter on all future occasions, to the choice of those persons only who might have been approved by an Inquisitorial Committee appointed to examine them respecting the doctrines of their Creed ; and sentencing all ministers thereafter to be ordained, to depo-

sition, if they did not preach and teach all the articles of a Creed which was then defined, and which involved some of the most mysterious and most intricate points of controversial theology. Against these Overtures, the Rev. Samuel Watson, minister of Killinchy, entered his protest, which is duly recorded in the minutes of Synod for that year; but as he knew his congregation to be divided in opinion upon these subjects, and as the obnoxious Overtures were declared not to have any reference to ministers already ordained, he was unwilling to disturb the harmony of a congregation over which he had presided for thirty years in peace and concord; and therefore did not join the Remonstrants in their separation from the General Synod. This confidence in the solemn stipulation of a religious body was misplaced. No sooner was the *Test* above referred to refused to be taken by certain individuals of that body, than the *Hue and Cry* of HERESY was raised against them; and among others against the minister of this congregation: and every effort was made to destroy his usefulness, by circulating reports to his prejudice, and sending ministers from different quarters to preach in and pervade the congregation, in its length and in its breadth. These, as there is good reason for believing, misrepresented the doctrines taught by him, and very naturally alarmed the minds of some well-meaning, but weak-minded individuals. A few of these in consequence absented themselves from his ministrations. This partial secession having reached the ears of the presbytery of Belfast, that presbytery resolved to hold an investigation relative to the above rumours, and after full inquiry came, in the month of May, 1832, to the following decision: entirely contrary to the expectation of the congregation, who assiduously attended during the whole of the proceedings. “*That the Doctrines of the Trinity and Original Sin were not preached by Mr. Watson, and consequently that the Gospel was not preached in the congregation.*” The congregation however, unanimously supplicated the presbytery to continue Mr. Watson as their minister. Notwithstanding this amicable, and as the congregation hoped, final settlement, a few of the very individuals who concurred in its propriety, continued their usual course of misrepresentation and annoyance. In this they were supported by the Synod of Ulster, though much to the injury

of the peace and harmony of the congregation. Still the great body of the people continued to adhere to their pastor, and were resuming their wonted respectable appearance. The improvement of the congregation latterly, was strongly evinced by the regular attendance of almost all the oldest and most intelligent members ; and by the increased and increasing labours of its pastor, as appears by the registry of baptisms, marriages, &c. ; the former amounting in the year 1834, to the unprecedented number of upwards of 240, and the latter to nearly 60. Such was the state of the congregation of Killinchy up to the month of June last, when the Synod of Ulster, by its unhallowed interference, again disturbed its tranquillity, by appointing, in Mr. Watson's absence, and without any application from his people, a committee of its own body to take charge of the congregation. The appointment of this committee was preceded by the most inflammatory and insulting language, uttered among others, by the Rev. JOHN BARNETT, the moderator, who even descended from the pulpit, for the purpose ; and the statement of the Gospel not being preached in Killinchy, was again and again reiterated. These proceedings on the part of the Synod of Ulster, naturally called forth strong feelings of indignation in the congregation, at such repeated insults ; and they immediately took measures to avert any injurious consequences that might result from such an uncalled for and gratuitous interference. But as some difference of opinion might reasonably be anticipated, in a congregation consisting altogether of not less than 1000 families, (of whom however not quite 600 were seatholders,) it was judged advisable that a correct list should be prepared, of all the members who were qualified to vote on any congregational question : from which, if necessary, the congregation might be polled, upon any resolutions that might be proposed. The preparation of this list was entrusted to the committee of the congregation, consisting of four members, *two* of whom were *supporters*, and *two* *opponents* of the measures of the General Synod. In preparing the list, they were aided by two assistants, one chosen from each party in the congregation ; and guided by the rules laid down in the Synod's Code of Discipline, respecting the qualification of voters. No name was inserted in the list without the consent of both parties

in the committee. The requisite means having thus been prepared for ascertaining the sense of the congregation with the most perfect fairness and impartiality, and these means having been adopted with the complete concurrence of both parties, a meeting of the congregation was regularly convened, on Tuesday, August 4, 1835; and resolutions adopted by a majority of 140 to 67, on which was founded the following Memorial to the Synod at Cookstown.

“To the Rev. the Synod of Ulster, to meet in Cookstown, on Tuesday, 11th August, instant,

“The Memorial of the Presbyterian Congregation of Killinchy, respectfully sheweth,

“That your Memorialists have heard with much surprise and deep regret, that the Synod of Ulster at its late meeting in Belfast, appointed a committee of its Rev. body, ‘to take charge of the Congregation of Killinchy,’ in direct opposition to the opinions of several members of your Rev. body; members too, some of whom have been long and intimately acquainted with the members of our communion; and your Memorialists respectfully submit, in violation of an implied adjustment of our differences by the visitation presbytery in May, 1832; which presbytery left us in the enjoyment of our privileges, and at full liberty to take such ulterior measures as we might deem most conducive to our own interests. Your Memorialists cannot but deeply deplore that temporising policy by which years are permitted to elapse betwixt a sentence and its execution, thus tampering with our feelings, and tantalizing our most sanguine expectations. Your Memorialists are fully aware of the necessity and importance of a pure gospel ministry, and are ready to acknowledge that there are in this, as they are confident there are in every society of equal extent, dissentients. But they are confident that the great doctrines of man’s accountability, a future state of rewards and punishments, the prospect of pardon through the mediation and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ on sincere repentance, together with the influence of the Holy Spirit on the heart of man, are a brief epitome of Gospel doctrine; and these, your memorialists humbly submit, are now, and always have been taught by our worthy pastor as many of us as are ready to attest, so far as they are capable of judging at the distance of nearly forty years,

and during which period he has, so far as we know, both from principle and by precept, exhibited a splendid example of charity, sobriety, integrity, and good will to every human being within the bounds of this large and populous district. If this be not preaching the Gospel, we know not what the Gospel is. But if this be preaching the Gospel, then the Gospel *now is*, and *always has been* taught in our congregation; and to affirm that the Gospel was not preached to us, is to affirm what your memorialists believe to be untrue, and can only be considered by us as an insult to our understandings as men, and a libel on our characters as christians.

“Your memorialists respectfully remind your Rev. body, that our esteemed pastor is justly endeared to us, as well by his long and faithful services, as by many and tender recollections: and therefore we are determined to adhere to his ministrations, so long as he conducts himself as heretofore, and continues to preach the above great doctrines of christianity. And as we are justly jealous of our privileges as Presbyterians, we consider it to be our duty, in the exercise of our undoubted rights, to judge of the fitness of the time to apply to your Rev. body, in co-operation with our pastor, for permission to choose an assistant and successor. The object of your memorialists in thus obtruding themselves on your attention, is for the purpose of preserving that tranquillity and good feeling which has so long prevailed in our community; and therefore, we earnestly entreat your Rev. body, to cancel your resolution passed at your meeting in Belfast respecting us, and thereby restore that confidence in your decisions which has been partially shaken by your recent conduct towards us. Thus, we conscientiously believe, would the glory of God be promoted, the interests of religion advanced, the peace, the happiness, the integrity of our congregation preserved, and the Presbyterian church shielded from the mockery and scorn of its multiplied and multiplying enemies. And your memorialists as in duty bound shall ever pray.

“Done in our Meeting-house, this 4th day of August, 1835. Signed on behalf of the meeting, by

ROBERT CARSE, *Chairman.*”

“The following persons are appointed to present this our Memorial, and to act and do in this case as if we

were all personally present, viz: Rev. S. Watson, together with Messrs. Robert Carse, Doctor Hay, Anthony Taylor, David Reid, and Robert Clark, *Elder*."

It deserves to be mentioned, that when these resolutions and the memorial given above, were proposed to the adoption of the meeting, some of the anti-synodical party in the congregation suggested, that as time was very valuable at that season of the year, the sense of the congregation might be taken *without calling the roll*, by a show of hands; or, by one party going out at one door, and the other at an opposite one; so that the members on both sides might be counted without delay. But to this their opponents would by no means agree. Indeed they received the proposal with contempt; and treated it with scorn. "What,"—they cried—"this is a pretty story! The committee and their assistants have now been several days occupied in making out a list of voters; their task is completed: a list is prepared, in the accuracy of which both parties are agreed; and now, after all this trouble, you propose to throw it aside, without making any further use of it! No, no. We are ready to go through the whole list from beginning to end, though it should require us to meet you here from day to day!" These remonstrances prevailed, and the congregation was duly polled from the list in question, with the result that has been already stated, viz: a majority against the Synodical party, of more than *two to one*.

The prayer of the foregoing memorial, notwithstanding its respectful and christian spirit, the Synod thought proper to *reject*, on the slightest and most frivolous grounds. Accordingly, in defiance of every intreaty, the committee met in Killinchy Meeting-house, on the 19th of August, 1835; and although they came in direct opposition to the expressed wish of a large majority of the congregation, they were most courteously received, and every facility afforded to conduct their investigation; especially, by those more immediately opposed to the whole of their proceedings.

The testimony adduced before the committee, differed little from that submitted to the visitation presbytery of Belfast in 1832; and yet to the utter astonishment of all, and even of those least interested, the committee adopted the following as a part of their finding. After referring to matters over which Mr. Watson had no

control, they resolved to recommend Mr. Watson to retire, in full possession of the bounty; and meanwhile, that "*The Committee, on every third Sabbath, send some of its members to preach in Killinchy,*" by which is to be understood, in *Killinchy Meeting-house*, as has been expressly admitted by Mr. Barnett, the moderator. Hear this, ye Presbyterians of Ulster! This is surely one of the most extraordinary proceedings ever resorted to in the Presbyterian Church. What, to deprive the people of Killinchy of the right of selecting their own religious instructor, and thereby lay the foundation for the future degradation of their own pastor! Is this fair? Is this just? Is this honourable? In the whole history of the Presbyterian Church, so far as is known, there is nothing to be compared to it. It is a procedure at once the most insinuating, and therefore the more dangerous; the most arbitrary, and consequently the more repulsive; the most intolerant, and therefore not to be endured. After such tyrannical proceedings, what other course was left to the people of Killinchy, but either to submit in silence to their own degradation, or renounce all connexion with so intolerant a body, and seek elsewhere that protection which was denied them by the Synod of Ulster? They could not long hesitate in making their election. Accordingly, upon the announcement of the finding of the committee, the Session published the following notice.

"Notice. The Seat-Holders of this Congregation, are earnestly requested by the Session, to meet here on this day fortnight, in order to adopt, after divine service, such measures as may to them seem proper for securing the rights and privileges of this ancient and respectable congregation, in consequence of the late proceedings of the General Synod of Ulster, and the decision of the committee of that body which has now been read."

"Signed by order, WILLIAM M'CLURE, Session Clerk."

In pursuance of this notice, (which was a week longer than is usual beforehand,) one of the largest meetings of Seat-holders ever remembered, assembled in the Meeting-house, on Sabbath, September 6, 1835: when after divine service, a Chairman was appointed, and the following motion was made and seconded:—

"Moved—That in consequence of the tyrannical proceedings of the General Synod of Ulster, this Congregation do now retire from that body, and become independent of all Synods and Presbyteries."

To this motion, the following amendment was submitted and seconded :—

“Resolved—That the Presbyterian Congregation of Killinchy were living in perfect harmony with one another, and with their respected pastor, when the Presbytery of Belfast disturbed their peace in the year 1832, by unnecessary and injurious interference. That the Synod of Ulster at the last meeting in Belfast, adopted resolutions still farther infringing on the rights and privileges of the Congregation, and subsequently at Cookstown rejected the supplication of a very large majority of the Seat-Holders regularly convened in their place of worship. That the General Synod’s Committee assembled on Wednesday, the 19th ult. having passed a resolution to deprive our esteemed and valued pastor, Mr. Watson, of his pulpit every third Sabbath, and to put a stranger in his place, we consider such a proceeding as a virtual deposition of our beloved pastor, (intended to prepare the way for his actual degradation,) and an unlawful infringement of our most sacred rights and privileges as Presbyterians. That under these circumstances, we are compelled in vindication of conscience, and in maintenance of those invaluable rights handed down to us by our forefathers, to renounce the jurisdiction of the General Synod of Ulster, which we hereby do renounce and disclaim; and further we do now agree, as lovers of the Bible, and determined, to maintain that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, to place ourselves under the care of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, or the Presbytery of Antrim, as the Session may advise; as both these bodies, by one of their fundamental laws, guarantee the full and free choice of any minister, whose views of Christian doctrines may be in accordance with our own religious opinions.

“Killinchy Meeting, this 6th day of September, 1835.”

“Attested by our Chairman,

DAVID REID.

It may be proper here to observe, that the Rev. John Barnett, the Moderator—together with other members of the Synod’s committee, attended on this occasion; and as the Moderator candidly acknowledged, with the express intention of assisting “to take the poll.” But although the dissentients had used every exertion, disseminated printed placards and hand-bills, and canvassed the Congregation during the preceding week, and

boasted that they would "*poll to a man*," they now endeavoured by every means in their power, *to prevent* the sense of the Congregation from being ascertained, in consequence of their conviction of the feeling of the House being against them, and the paucity of their numbers. Here Mr. Barnett attempted to interfere with the proceedings, in order to prevent a poll; but an almost universal burst of disapprobation was manifested by the members; exclaiming "*Put him down! He sha'n't be heard! He has no business here:*"—and but for the interference and at the special request of the friends of the contemplated measure, he would not have obtained a hearing. He was then permitted to address the house. After which he thought fit, under cover of a protest about some alleged irregularities, to retire from the contest and leave the Congregation to transact their own business.

The following is a copy of this so-called protest:—

"We, as members of the Committee of the Synod of Ulster, appointed to take charge of the Congregation of Killinchy, in our name, and in name of all those connected with said Congregation who shall adhere to us, do hereby solemnly protest against the poll which was this day taken in the said Congregation of Killinchy, on the ground; 1st. that it was conducted in a manner contrary to the established law of the Synod; Code of Discipline, Sections, 10th and 12th: 2d. that it was greatly unjust towards those members of the Congregation who adhered to the Synod of Ulster.

"*Killinchy, 6th September, 1835.*

"JOHN BARNETT, *Moderator of Committee.*

"S. HAMILTON ROWAN,

"ALEXANDER DICKEY,

"JOHN POTTS."

It is strange to find Mr. Barnett, who had travelled from Moneymore to Killinchy, (about fifty miles,) "*to see that the poll should be fairly taken*," protesting virtually against taking any poll at all. But it is unnecessary to dwell on a document, whose absurdity speaks for itself. The paper professes to be a "*protest*" against certain proceedings of the Congregation of Killinchy; yet there is not the name of *a single member of that society*, among those appended to it! This circumstance alone determines it to be null, void and of no effect; for in no case whatever is any protest allowed to be tender-

ed to any court, civil or ecclesiastical,—much less to interrupt or stay its proceedings,—unless it emanates from its own members, and it attested by *their actual signatures*. But the document is not less futile in its alleged reasons of dissent, than it was unadmissible considering the parties with whom it originated. It founds its first objection on the omission of forms required by the Code of Discipline published by the General Synod; but we can assure our readers that section 10 contains no regulations whatever respecting polls; and Section xii, none that are applicable to this case. The whole of it is strictly confined to the one case of *choosing a minister*; and cannot possibly be interpreted so as to extend to the removal of a Congregation from one religious association to another. This will appear from its own words, “If it appear that two-thirds of the votes, and two-thirds of the stipend of all the voters polled, *be in favour of the candidate*, the presiding ministers *shall draw up a call*, and see it signed in the meeting-house.”—The protest specifies no instance of injustice—nor can any such be given.

If Mr. Barnett and his co-protesters had read the Code to which they referred, they must have been aware of this; and if so, we cannot acquit them of disingenuousness in advancing their objection. We shall not attempt to disguise the feelings of pain with which we saw the names of JOHN BARNETT, and HAMILTON ROWAN, affixed to a document like this. Times are changed, and new generations arise, with new feelings and ideas: but we cannot help remembering there were once men who bore those names,—once so honoured over Ulster,—who would have thrust their fingers into molten lead, sooner than append their signatures to a shuffling and disingenuous document intended to debar a Christian Congregation from the means of asserting and vindicating its outraged but indefeasible rights.

The Chairman then called on the Book-keeper for the current year, to produce the list of voters, containing the name of every individual entitled to vote, and whose name had been entered in the Committee Book up to the preceding week. This list was precisely the same as that which had been employed at the preceding poll, on Tuesday the 4th of August, with the addition of the names of about 36 persons, who had, in the interval, established their claim to vote: and it is to be observed

that their names were inserted by the same Committee, and in the same manner, as on that occasion; no name being admitted into the list without the consent of both parties in the Committee, with a single exception. Thus was every reasonable guarantee afforded for accuracy and fairness. It is also deserving of notice, that of the 36 persons who were thus added to the Catalogue, (after deducting a few who remained neutral,) a *majority were opposed to the amendment*. In taking the poll, the Committee-book was at hand, for the purpose of verifying the list, if any dispute should arise as to its accuracy; but no such necessity arose, and no such reference was made. The poll was conducted in a systematic and orderly manner: two tellers were appointed, and a person to call, and another to superintend the accuracy of the roll-call of voters. On summing up the votes, after every name had been *twice* called over, distinctly, the numbers stood as follow.

For renouncing the Synod of Ulster,..... 219

Against,..... 10

Some of the dissentients declined voting, either with the intention of joining in the protest, or under the impression of their further opposition being fruitless.

Such has been the result of this, to the Congregation of Killinchy, eventful day. By the course they have followed, they have emancipated themselves from the intolerant bondage of ecclesiastical tyranny, and the persecuting violence of the Synod of Ulster, and thus proved themselves the worthy inheritors of the spirit that actuated the glorious reformers who first freed their Protestant forefathers from such acts as were passed at the Council of Trent and the Synod of Dort.

Before the close of the proceedings, the Session having deliberated apart on the subject referred to their decision by the vote of the Congregation, came to a resolution that the Congregation should attach itself to the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster. This their advice and decision was communicated to the meeting by the Chairman, and received without a dissentient voice. Information of these proceedings having been forwarded to the Moderator of the Remonstrant Synod, that Gentleman, with a praiseworthy promptitude, summoned a meeting of the Body *pro-re-natâ*, to consider this business; which was held at Belfast, on Wednesday, the 9th day of September,

1835: and which was numerously attended. At this meeting a memorial was presented from certain members of the Congregation of Killinchy, referring to the resolutions agreed to at the meeting of that Congregation on the preceding Lord's-day; and praying that the Congregation of Killinchy, might be recognised as a worshipping society, in connexion with the Synod. The Rev. Samuel Watson and the Commissioners who appeared in support of the memorial having been heard, and having answered with the most satisfactory explicitness, the questions which were proposed by various members of Synod, both respecting the moral character of the minister,—the nature of the measures pursued in this case by the Presbytery of Belfast, and by the Committee of the General Synod of Ulster,—and the regularity of the various proceedings adopted by the Congregation of Killinchy,—the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted.

1. "RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,—That it appears from the documents and statements submitted to this Synod, that the Presbytery of Belfast in connexion with the General Synod of Ulster, did at a visitation of the Congregation of Killinchy, held in the year 1832, inquire into the moral character and preaching of the Rev. Samuel Watson; when they found the former to be blameless; but took objection to the omission of certain disputed doctrines which it was affirmed he did not teach; and thereupon affirmed that the Gospel was not preached in that Congregation: but that his people, notwithstanding, unanimously supplicated that he might be continued as their minister.

2. "That in June 1835, the Synod of Ulster, without any memorial or other public document from the Congregation of Killinchy, appointed a Committee to inquire into its condition, and take it under their care: and that this Committee was continued in force by the adjourned meeting of the Synod held at Cookstown, in August last, notwithstanding a memorial adopted by 142 out of 207 seatholders who voted on the question, praying that the appointment of the Committee might be rescinded, as injurious to the tranquillity and rights of the Congregation.

3. "That the aforesaid Committee, at a meeting held in Killinchy, on the 19th of August ult., did, on similar grounds to those stated by the Presbytery of Belfast,

appoint that a member of their own body should preach in the Congregation of Killinchy every third Sunday; such appointment being contrary to the wishes and without the consent of the minister, session, and members of the Congregation, and in violation to the right of the people to have the Gospel preached unto them by the minister of their choice.

4. "That after due and public notice from the pulpit, of fourteen days, the Congregation of Killinchy, did by a majority of 219 over 10, of the votes duly qualified and actually tendered, resolve to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the General Synod of Ulster, and enter into connexion with this Synod, for the preservation of its internal peace, and the maintenance of its religious liberties: both of which were violated by the proceedings of the General Synod of Ulster, its Presbytery and Committee.

WHEREUPON IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,—

5. "That this Synod, having been established, among other purposes, for the preservation of the religious liberties, and Christian privileges of Congregations, and for the maintenance of their right to choose their religious instructors freely and without dictation,—does hereby cordially grant the prayer of the memorial from Killinchy; and that the Rev. Samuel Watson and the Congregation of Killinchy are accordingly hereby received as a minister and Congregation in connexion with the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.

6. "Resolved, that Mr. Watson and his people be annexed to the Presbytery of Bangor."

The Minister, Session and Congregation of Killinchy having thus by an express and formal act, withdrawn themselves from the discipline and jurisdiction of the General Synod of Ulster,—and the Remonstrant Synod, a body of co-ordinate jurisdiction and authority, having received them under its care;—all connexion between the General Synod and the Congregation being now dissolved, and all pretence for the exercise of ecclesiastical authority removed,—the Committee of the General Synod, with its usual regardlessness of principle, rule, and precedent, proceeded to pass upon Mr. Watson,—*a sentence of suspension!* Yes! they actually passed a vote declaring him,—though *no longer a member of their church*, and received and recognised as *a member of*

another body,—to be suspended from all ministerial functions and privileges ! This vote they adopted *without a particle of additional evidence* to that on which their former award was founded : nay, without *giving him notice of any charge* to be brought against him ; in violation, therefore, of every rule of church discipline, even had Mr. Watson been subject to their authority ; in the face of their own former finding, which recognised and continued Mr. Watson as the minister of Killinchy, only recommending him to take an assistant ;—and in utter contempt for that general principle of all Protestant Churches, which confines their ecclesiastical censures to those who are within the pale of their own communion. What the object of this nominal and disgraceful sentence may have been, we are unable positively to state ; but it *probably* was intended to serve as the foundation of an intrigue for depriving Mr. Watson of his bounty. On this point, however, we feel no apprehensions. Under the wise and liberal Government of Earl Mulgrave, and Lord Morpeth, the interests of justice and truth are safe.

It only remains to be stated, that the Congregation of Killinchy, now in connexion with the Remonstrant Synod, numbers upwards of 700 families ; and probably contains considerably more than 3000 individuals :—that its members are among the most respectable, well-conducted, intelligent, and independent men in that part of the County of Down :—that its minister, session, and people are harmonious, and contented ; and well-pleased with the decisive measure which they took, in withdrawing from a connexion in which they could never hope for peace or comfort ;—that the minister has not been disturbed by the Synodical party in his ministrations on the Lord's Day, although we have heard that some interruption was to have been attempted ;—and that, never during his ministry, were these ministrations attended by a more numerous, or more attentive auditory. There is every reason to hope that the interests of religion will be greatly benefited by the change of circumstances which has taken place: *continued*

We have heard that the Committee of the General Synod of Ulster are labouring to establish a new Congregation in Killinchy, to be connected with their own body. To this we see no objection, as there are some individuals of their own persuasion, for whom they are in duty

bound to make some provision. We would fain hope, however, that in pursuing this end, they will work only by lawful and honourable means; avoiding the usual methods of denunciation, backbiting, misrepresentation, and clamour; and abstaining from those acts which can only tend to engender animosity and ill-will. If their proceedings are conducted in a proper and becoming Christian spirit, we feel assured that their brethren of the original Congregation will, not only, not take offence at their proceedings, but will assist them by their personal recommendation and pecuniary aid. Indeed, at the Congregational meeting on the sixth of September, one of the members of the majority promised thus much to the minority, in case they should withdraw, in the manner stated; and we know that he will keep his word.—If the two parties formerly in that Congregation, can no longer agree to walk together, their interest and duty alike dictate, that they should separate in peace.

REVIEW.

The Sect "Every-where spoken against:" Two Sermons preached at Newry, in October, 1835. By the Rev. JOHN MITCHEL. Published at the request of the Congregation. 8vo. pp. 35.

THESE TWO Discourses are worthy of universal circulation. We do not know a publication which is better calculated to open the eyes of the prejudiced and unreflecting, to the gross delusions which have been practised upon them, in so many instances, by their spiritual guides. Never have we seen a work of the same extent better calculated to put the deceived upon their guard, and make the deceiver blush. Mr. Mitchel has done the cause of truth good service, by the composition and publication of these most valuable sermons; and we must add, that the members of his Congregation have done themselves honour by their vote of thanks to him for preaching them, and their request that they might be printed. They may be assured, they could not take a more effectual means of vindicating their own religious character, or of animating and encouraging their worthy pastor in his labours, than they have adopted, by entering into the resolutions which are prefixed to the publication now before us; and which we have

much pleasure in laying before the readers of this miscellany.

“RESOLVED,—That the thanks of this Congregation be given to the Rev. JOHN MITCHEL, for the two interesting Sermons lately preached by him in refutation of the calumnies circulated against the Scriptural doctrines taught in this House, and illustrative of Unitarianism,—the truth of Christianity.

“RESOLVED,—That a respectful request be now made to our worthy Minister, to allow those Sermons to be Published for the benefit of the Congregation, and the information of the Community.”

Mr. Mitchel takes his text from ACTS, xxiii. 22. “We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest;—for, as concerning this sect, we know that every-where it is spoken against.” After a brief allusion to the circumstances of the Apostle Paul, to whom these words were addressed by the Jews at Rome; and to those of the primitive Christians, the sect which is referred to in the text,—Mr. Mitchel points out the resemblance between their situation *then*, and that of the believers in “ONE GOD, THE FATHER,” at the present day. Without adverting to other points of similarity, Mr. M. shows, what indeed is too well known by the experience of almost every individual who has been called upon to take a part in this great controversy,—that the modern advocates for the scripture doctrine of “One God, and One Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,” have at least one particular of resemblance to the first followers of Christ; that they also are “*a sect everywhere spoken against.*” “Because we follow not with our theological opponents, in professing tenets which we cannot find in the Bible, which we conscientiously believe to be opposed to the doctrine of the Bible,—no term of reproach has been thought too vile, no misrepresentation of our principles too gross, to be poured forth against us from the pulpit, and from the press;—and still more frequently and disgustingly, even in the intercourse of private society.”

“And would to God, that in the explanation of our principles, we could but meet somewhat of the same spirit of candour among professing Christians around us, which St. Paul met with even among the Jews at Rome. They honestly desired to hear the Apostle’s sentiments and views of Christian doctrine from himself. This was fair—this was candid. But how seldom do we thus find access to the ears and the understanding of our prejudiced opponents! How rarely do they thus discover the spirit of a candid, impartial enquiry! Instead of hearing from ourselves, either in the pulpit or through the Press, or in friendly conversation, what we think of CHRIST,

and of the doctrine of CHRIST, most of them refuse to know anything about us, save through the misrepresentations of our opponents. We are like the first Christians a "sect everywhere spoken against;" and we must be in error. Such is the awful unparalleled bigotry of these times!"

The evil nature and pernicious results of bigotry—*"the blind unreasoning prejudice of ignorance,"*—are next pourtrayed in a passage of uncommon eloquence and power;—and that *"assumed bigotry"* which, without sharing the prejudices of the vulgar, turns them to *profitable account*,—and which in this age of cant and pretence, is often found to out-herod Herod in its denunciations of unpopular opinions, and to leave all competitors far behind in the race of intolerance,—is characterised in language, as just as it is striking. The injury done to the cause of truth, by the conduct of genuine or pretended bigots,—the outrages which they have perpetrated upon the inalienable and indefeasible rights of conscience,—the cruelties which they have committed upon the unhappy but innocent victims of their rage, in ancient times, are forcibly described: and the passage is closed by the following reference to the circumstances of the present times and our own country.

"It is true, and let us rejoice in it, that these evils have, in some degree, been checked by circumstances in our day. It is true that the increasing light and liberty of this age, and the consequently improved spirit of legislation and civil government, have put the maniac of religious intolerance, as it were, into a strait-waistcoat; and, if they have been unable to imbue him with a meekness of heart, have at least tied up his hands from doing all the mischief that he could desire. It is true,—and we have much reason to bless God for it, that selfish and narrow-minded men, professing an extreme zeal for peculiar views of disputed theology, have it not now in their power, as they used to have, to chain down equally the limbs and the spirits of their fellows in ignominious thralldom; have it not in their power, as they once had, to coerce the creed and the conscience of all around them;—and to employ the axe, and the gibbet, and the faggot, as the ready instruments either of conversion or of death. The infuriated bigots of our day are greatly hemmed in and hampered in the exercise of that power which belongs to the arm of flesh:—they cannot now employ the same sweeping measures, in fulfilment of their favourite objects:—they cannot now take the same range in the gambols of their intolerance.

"But it must be confessed, that some of them have shown themselves sufficiently active within that sphere of mischief which is still open to them; that they are perfect adepts in the wielding of those weapons of calumny and defamation, which were employed against the Apostles and primitive Christians; and that they are nearly able to fulfil all their benevolent purposes by slander and backbiting, by

obloquy and misrepresentation of every kind. If the wisest and best Christian in the Community,—if the most conscientious and exemplary Minister of Christianity, but scruple to receive *their* crude and contradictory creed; if he dare to prefer the Word of God to the commandments of men;—immediately the cry of heresy is raised, and echoed, and rung, from the designing tongue of the calumniator, to the alarmed ear of prejudice and ignorance. He is trumpeted forth as an Arian, a Socinian, an Unbeliever, a Deist, an Atheist! These are awfully-appalling terms in the minds of humble, illiterate Christians;—who are the most startled, because they are not aware of their import—just as children are frightened by stories of ghosts and hobgoblins. And it would be strange, indeed, if the mass of mankind would not fly from such things, just as they would shun the contagion of pestilence, or the pit of perdition.

“Thus bigotry still answers her purpose,—still accomplishes her end.—If she cannot cut out the tongue of truth; she can, by a few talismanic sounds of defamation, stop the ear of ignorant prejudice. If she cannot imprison the body of the reputed heretic; she can thus do a great deal towards fettering the minds of the unreflecting multitude. If she is prevented from kindling her fires, and burning out the heart of the supposed unbeliever; she can, at least, through the medium of the vilest and most groundless obloquy, cause endless heart-burning and unchristian strife, even amongst those whose hearts and hopes were one.”

Mr. Mitchel next proceeds to examine in detail those charges which are most frequently and most confidently advanced against Unitarians, by their opponents: confining his attention to the *principal* points of accusation; for as he truly observes, to attempt to answer *all*, would be to undertake an endless task. The first to which he adverts is the very common but most groundless assertion, that Unitarians feel no reverence for the Holy Scriptures; but, on the contrary, are ready to twist them for their own purposes, or to set them aside altogether.

“In preferring this charge, our opponents seem to calculate safely upon a general want of Scripture knowledge, and of calm reflection, among the people to whom it is addressed. For persons of any reflection must be satisfied, that it is our deep reverence for the Word of God, and for the dictates of our own conscience, founded thereon, that has led us to the adoption of the principles we profess; and to that honest avowal of them, which, among other difficulties, has brought down such a shower of obloquy upon our heads. Whilst we flatly deny this charge, it will be proper to make a few observations upon it.

“Although we regard our English translation of the Scriptures as generally accurate, yet, we do not profess to think that King James' translators were either inspired, or infallible. Neither do our opponents: and whoever reads their controversial writings will find, that

they are obliged to have more frequent recourse to a revision of the original, and a correction of the translation, than we;—although the translators most probably entertained similar views of theology with themselves. We do not blame them for this, when there is any reason in the proceeding: for we reckon it proper, in all cases where the original will bear us out in reconciling Scripture with Scripture, to do the same. But we throw back this foul charge upon those who are hardy enough to make it; and we must refer it to the good sense of mankind to judge between us, as to our comparative reverence for Holy Scripture; and to decide for themselves *who they are* that most honour the volume of Divine revelation,—they, who must express their creed in the language of men;—or they, whose creed is plainly expressed in the Word of God;—they, who are not content with the Bible, as the test of Christian faith;—or they who are; and who look upon it as being so, *sui generis*, so incomparably excellent, that they will neither impose upon others, nor suffer to be imposed upon themselves, any other test whatsoever.”

The next charge to which Mr. Mitchel adverts, is that of lowering the dignity of the Son of God, and degrading him from his throne of glory. This accusation, as he shows, cannot justly be preferred against the body of Christians to whom he belongs; and if it might, through ignorance, have been advanced against others, certainly ought never to have been brought forward against *him*: as his sentiments and the arguments by which they are supported, have now been on record and before the public, for a considerable time. In connexion with this subject, we find the following passage.

“With the same observations we reply to all those foul and defamatory charges which have been so long and so loudly rung upon the public ear, and which it has latterly been the habit to whisper into the *private ear*—as that we *deny* CHRIST; that we have no faith in a REDEEMER; that we deny the LORD that bought us;—in a word, that we are Deists, and do not believe in Divine revelation at all.

“Attacks of this nature upon our religious principles and character have of late become more *private and confidential*. It is customary, I find, for Ministers of religion, as well as others, to creep into houses, and endeavour to lead captive the silly people who will listen to their secret slander. Among many other instances, of a like nature, it is not long since a Minister of religion in this town, pursuing this stealthy and sinister vocation, called upon a family connected with this Congregation, and expressed the utmost astonishment and horror, to think that they could continue to wait on the ministry of a man who *denied* CHRIST. These were the terms in which he is reported, and, I doubt not, truly reported to have expressed himself. Can this person have any conscience, or any regard to truth? Either he is acquainted with my sentiments, or he is not. If he be, then must he, in this case, be speaking contrary to the known truth.

—if he be not, then is he, without knowledge, and without evidence, deliberately calumniating me behind my back ! And see what a character his foul calumny virtually gives of yourselves,—the whole of the intelligent Christian people of this Congregation ! According to his representation, *you* can have neither discernment, nor conscience. With the Word of God in your hands,—with the faith of CHRIST, we trust, in your hearts,—you are, nevertheless, it seems, constantly waiting on the ministry of a man who openly *denies* CHRIST ! The absurdity, the falsehood, the malignity of such a representation are about in equal shares. Certain people seem to think that mankind are easily deceived ; and, indeed, too many are so ;—but some are not thus to be practised on.—Certain people must be of opinion, too, that the most absurd falsehood falling from them must come with the clearness and force of a self-evident truth ;—but the period for this species of palmistry is fast passing away ; and men are more generally beginning to think and judge for themselves. This man says,—(but who that knows us will believe him ?)—that we *deny* CHRIST. Would he were present that he might have his mind disabused, and that he might become the instrument of disabusing the minds of others. I know there are minds which cannot be disabused ; and this person's mind may be of that stamp.

“ It may be seriously questioned, whether that man be a believer in Divine revelation,—whether he believe in God,—who can thus, before God, in the face of truth, and without any foundation of evidence, become, and continue, the false accuser of his brethren.”

How the ears of the vile wretch who has thus disgraced himself, and prostituted his sacred calling, must tingle, at hearing this record of his infamy quoted ;—and how his cheek must be suffused with the burning blush of shame, on perusing the narrative of his guilt ! Bad, however, as that man must be, and contemptible in every point of view, we believe that he does not stand alone : nor is Newry the only place which can boast the industrious labours of such a stealthy defamer of the brethren, in his vile vocation !

With his observations upon this charge, Mr. Mitchel closes his *First Sermon* : and here we shall conclude our present notice ; but before doing so, we must, as impartial critics, advert to two points of minor importance, which though they do not detract from the general merit of the discourse, yet deserve to be corrected in any future edition which may appear ; and we hope that several will be required.

In p. 7, Mr. Mitchel quotes HEB. xi. 36, 38, as descriptive of the sufferings of the early Christians for the sake of the Gospel. Now we think that the whole of the context, and more especially *ver.* 39 and 40, limit the application of the passage,—beyond all doubt or

question,—to the case of the Old Testament saints ; and we feel persuaded that Mr. M. himself, on reconsidering the passage, will be of the same opinion.

The other point to which we allude, is an instance, as we conceive, of false reading. In p. 13, Mr. M. cites 1 TIM. iii. 16, as containing the words, “ God was manifest in the flesh.” Now we allow that in this passage, it may admit of doubt whether we should read with Sir ISAAC NEWTON, “ *which was manifest,*” &c. or with Professor GRIESBACH, “ *He who was manifest.*” But we think that the balance of authority is so decidedly against that reading which Mr M. has followed, that which-soever of the others may be right, this is certainly wrong.

These however are only points of detail ; but in such matters “ we are nothing, if not critical.” The Sermons are excellent and admirable ; and we hope and trust, will soon find a place in the library of every family and Congregation of our religious body. In our next No. we shall give a brief analysis of the second discourse.

The Doctrines of the Reformation ; what they are, and what they are not : A Discourse preached on Sunday, August 23, 1835, with special reference to the Church of Geneva, and in sympathy with their Celebration on that day, of the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the Reformation. By GEORGE HARRIS, Glasgow. 12mo. pp. 24.

WE have not left ourselves room to notice this excellent and interesting discourse at the length which we could wish, and which it well merits ; but we cannot allow a publication of the Bible Christian to pass over, without cordially recommending it to the attention of the enlightened Christian public. It will be found clear in its statements, persuasive in its arguments, and accurate as well as perspicuous in its historical references. It admirably illustrates what are the true principles of the Reformation—and admirably repels the unjust pretensions of some, that arrogantly assume the name. We doubt not it will obtain an extensive circulation ; and we are sure it will be found a useful auxiliary to the cause of Christian truth and liberty.

OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

IN the Minutes of a General Synod of Ulster, held at Belfast, in June, 1835, but adjourned to Cookstown on the 12th of August, we find the following most IMPORTANT OVERTURE, to which we request the earnest attention of our readers.

“DECLARATORY OVERTURE.

“Whereas, doubts appear to exist respecting the meaning and extent of the resolution of last Synod, not to sustain any exceptions opposing the doctrines of the Confession of Faith; and whereas it is most desirable in itself, *and indispensable to the renewal and maintenance of ecclesiastical communion with other Presbyterian Churches*, to adhere to an UNQUALIFIED SUBSCRIPTION OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH:—This Synod do now DECLARE, in accordance with the resolution adopted at the last annual meeting of this Body, *that they will not, from this time forth, receive ANY EXCEPTIONS OR EXPLANATIONS* from candidates for the ministry; and REQUIRE, that all who in future wish to become licentiates or ministers of this church, shall subscribe its standards in terms of the formula agreed upon at Monaghan, in the year 1832, which is as follows: ‘*I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith to be founded upon, and agreeable to, the word of God, and as such I subscribe it* AS THE CONFESSION OF MY FAITH.’

“After some discussion thereon, the Synod adjourned for one hour.

“The debate on the declaratory Overture was then resumed; when it was moved and seconded,

“That the consideration of this Overture be postponed until next annual meeting of Synod.

“After a lengthened debate, the Roll was called, and the amendment negatived. The Overture was then put and agreed to.

“Against this decision, Mr. S. Dill and others protested, and promised to assign their reasons in due time. These reasons were subsequently given in and read, and ordered to be held *in retentis*.”

Let our readers mark, learn, and inwardly digest the foregoing extract. It is food for meditation, and deserves to be thoughtfully considered. We believe it to be pregnant with important results.

The Arminians, of whom there are many in the Synod of Ulster, joined with the Calvinists, in those measures which led to the secession of the Remonstrants in 1829. The two parties, having got rid of those who were esteemed less Orthodox than either, have now begun to contend among themselves. The stern, gloomy Calvinism of the Westminster Confession, has triumphed in the Synod, and is now enthroned in the foregoing decree for "*unqualified subscription*." Can the Arminians reconcile it with their consciences, or their characters, to continue in the body?—Time will show; but this much we may say, that if they do, they will stand disgraced and degraded, in the public opinion of Presbyterian Ulster.

Intelligence.

OPENING OF THE EDINBURGH UNITARIAN CHAPEL.

THE new Chapel erected by the Unitarians of Edinburgh, on the Castle Terrace, and to which, as a mere distinctive appellation, they have given the name of SAINT MARK'S, was opened for public worship on Sunday last, the 18th of October current. The building is in the Flemish style, and is a lasting monument of the genius of its eminent architect, David Bryce, Esq., of Edinburgh. The interior combines every beauty and advantage which could be imagined in a place of worship. It is well lighted, well aired, well heated, and comfortably seated. It is fitted up in a style of great elegance, and above all, of good taste and perfect keeping. It is admitted to be the best constructed place of worship in the city.

The services of the day were opened by the Rev. GEORGE HARRIS, of Glasgow. The Chapel was exceedingly crowded. It was intended to accommodate 700 persons, but the whole passages were occupied, and there must have been at least 800 individuals present. The preacher chose for his text, the following passage from John iv. 23, 24: "The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The discourse was a series of the most impressive eloquence, delivered in a noble, dignified, and most impassioned manner. Its peculiar beauty was its perfect adaptation to the occasion. Nothing was omitted which ought to have been said, and nothing was said which the most fastidious could have wished to have been omitted.

In the afternoon, the Rev. B. T. STANNUS, minister of the congregation, officiated. The Chapel was again crowded; the public of Edinburgh seemed to be animated with one common feeling of desire, to 'come and see' if any 'good thing' could 'come out of Nazareth.' The preacher took for the subject of his discourse, that passage in Isaiah, lii. 7: 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that

saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.' He opened his discourse with a historical sketch of the occasion to which the prophet particularly adverted—to the misery of the Jews under the Babylonish captivity, and to the effect of the announcement of their emancipation upon the feelings of the nation. It contained much that spoke to the best sympathies of our nature, and was applied in the most ingenious and appropriate manner to the main object of the discourse, which was to illustrate the analogous message of Christ to the world—the nature of that message as being 'good tidings,' and the manner in which alone they could be considered as tidings 'of peace.' He concluded his discourse, with the application of his previous remarks to the peculiar occasion on which they were assembled together; and so powerful was his final appeal to his audience, that all of them were deeply moved.

The effect of the previous discourses, was to collect in the evening an audience so numerous, that the Chapel was crowded almost to suffocation, and many went away from total inability to procure accommodation. Mr. HARRIS delivered a discourse, remarkable for close argument and clear deduction, for manly energy, and elegant illustration. It was calculated to be of great benefit to the cause of Unitarian Christianity, by the clear and convincing manner in which it illustrated and enforced upon those timid or selfish persons, who were more afraid of offending the prejudices of men than the majesty of God, the duty of publicly declaring their real religious sentiments, and in which it animated the wavering to support the cause of truth.

The collection in aid of the funds of the Chapel, gave the best proof of the impression which the services had made. The gratuitous assistance of many of the finest choristers of the city, added much to the power of the fine organ which had been built for the Congregation. The friends of Unitarian Christianity have much reason to congratulate themselves, upon the effect produced by the services of the day, in which nothing whatever occurred, that could give rise to any feeling but that of unmixed satisfaction, and confident anticipation of the future.

SPEECH OF THE REV. R. B. MACLELLAND, on returning thanks for his health, proposed as a Toast, at his Ordination Dinner, in Dromore.

Mr. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,]

I use not the cant of oratory, or the "set phrase" of affected humility, when I say I am overpowered by this expression of your kindness and good feeling. I rise labouring under a host of different emotions;—of gratitude to my good God and most affectionate heavenly Father, for his unvarying preservation of me, his blessing on my past exertions, and his guidance of me to the honorable and distinguished situation which I now hold;—of some trembling, at the responsibility to God and man, which I have this day voluntarily imposed upon myself;—and of exulting thankfulness to you, Sir, and to my good friends around me, and to others, no less kind, who are not present to my eye, for the exercise of that Christian charity, which prompted them to overlook my many fail-

ings, to set its highest value on whatever was in me of good, and to elevate me, by their honest suffrages, to the interesting offices of their guide, their pastor, and their friend. My gratitude to God, and my feeling of responsibility, I will keep for the solitude of my own closet, and for the silence of my own heart;—it becomes me now to speak only of the connection which has been this day formed between the First Presbyterian Congregation of Dromore, and myself.

Your partiality is the more flattering, when I remember who, and what kind of men have been my predecessors in the ministerial office in your congregation;—when I call to recollection that I have been preceded by a Colville, a Black, a Cumming, a Bankhead, and by your late pastor, whose presence among us this evening is the only obstacle to my speaking of him as my head and my heart would dictate, to my speaking of him in language which your heads and your hearts would most assuredly re-echo and approve. I will endeavour to follow, humbly and at a distance, in the path beaten by the frequent footsteps of these gifted men; and to expound and advocate these cheering, and elevated, and enlightened views of Christian doctrine and Christian duty, which have been enforced amongst you for centuries. Yet it is not *because* these principles have been as heir-looms in your households, as rich legacies bequeathed by sire to son, that I give them *my* approval; it is because they seem to me consonant to plain scripture, and to right reason. I am not one of these who believe because their fathers believed, and retain, uninvestigated, the teachings of their nurses, or their schoolmistresses; on the contrary, I cast aside, some years ago, after many an arduous struggle with my firmly-based, and deeply rooted prejudices, the creeds and the catechisms, the articles, and the confessions of my childhood, and enthroned the *Bible* in the place of their domination. The reception of the pure, and simple, and exhilarating doctrines of Bible Christianity, with all their gladdening depictures of the nature and attributes of God, and of the nature and destiny of man, was the almost instantaneous result of my intellectual enfranchisement; and these doctrines, with all their beneficent consequences, it will be equally my duty and my delight to unfold amongst you.

I cannot stand here, with a lineal descendant of Dr. Colville presiding at our festival, and with my immediate predecessor a guest at our table, without feeling that I am an enlisted soldier in the cause of Christian freedom; and that I have already taken the oath of allegiance. It was, I believe, in the year 1726, that your grandfather, Mr. Chairman, raised the voice of his protest against Synodical supremacy; and promulgated, in this place, the great Protestant principle that the Bible is our only book of laws, and God our only lawgiver, and Christ Jesus our only master; and joined with a large and respectable majority of this congregation, the Presbytery of Antrim, in seceding from the General Synod of Ulster. The spirit of sacerdotal domination languished for a season, and this congregation was, for convenience sake, re-attached to the General Synod. But ecclesiastical encroachment again waxed vigorous; and, not many years since, your late estimable clergyman, Mr. Nelson, brought forth once more the time-worn banner round which your forefathers had rallied, and the venerable ensign again fluttered in

the sunshine and streamed upon the gales of heaven,—and the sons asserted the independence of their sires,—and the battle was again fought,—and the victory was again won,—and your Congregation joined the Remonstrant Synod, in preferring the teachings of Christ Jesus to those of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. The advantages of these repeated victories shall not, willingly, be lost or depreciated, while they remain in my custody. I will ever advocate the cause of Religious Liberty, both within and without the pale of the church; I will ever oppose—so far as the opposition of argument and persuasion are efficient—all attempts to lord it over the consciences of men, whether they assume the direct and palpable form of commanding us to interpret the oracles of God according to a prescribed interpretation; or whether they put on the less obvious, but not less pernicious, shape of awarding or withholding civil privileges and emoluments according to the consonance or dissonance of the religious opinions of the people with legalised formularies.

But while I thus strenuously, and thus conscientiously maintain your and my interpretations of the doctrines of the Gospel, and conserve your and my christian franchises, I shall do so without entertaining the slightest, or most shadowy, or most transient emotion of enmity against any individual of the multitudes who differ from me in doctrine or in discipline. My judgment, my feelings, my religious principles unite in inclining me to love all mankind,—of whatsoever sect or denomination, of whatsoever language or complexion. I know that they are all my brothers; I know that they are the children of the same kind, heavenly parent; I know that “God hath made of one blood all the nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth;” I know that Christianity is a religion of peace and love; I know that there are generous-minded, and warm-hearted men of every creed and profession. I well remember that the schoolmaster from whom I learned most of what was wise and true, and good, and beautiful, was a Roman Catholic, educated in Maynooth. I well remember that the companion to whom my school-boy heart, with all its fresh, and young, and warm affections, most closely linked itself, was then a member and is now a minister in the Established Church. I well remember that the friends around whom my educated judgment, and my disciplined feelings entwined themselves in folds, which time and absence have not loosened but tightened, believed, most of them, in the Athanasian Creed, in the Westminster Confession of Faith. Knowing and remembering these things, I must, I shall not (by looking with aversion on any of those who differ from me in religious opinions, or by treating them with rudeness or unkindness,) sin against my own heart’s attachments, and against the spirit of that gospel of which I am a minister. I trust also that I shall receive from my brother clergymen, of all denominations, in Dromore and its neighbourhood, that courtesy of intercourse, and that cordial co-operation in every measure for the common well-being, which I am, myself, so desirous, so anxious to bestow.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, for the patient audience which you have afforded me; I again thank you from the deep places of my heart, for the kind regards which have placed me in my present honourable situation; and I pray God, that the connexion this day formed between us, may be conducive to our earthly happiness, and to our everlasting felicity.

OBITUARY.

JOHN CAYRE, Esq.

Died—on Monday, 28th September, at his house in Preston-place, Dublin, on the 81st year of his age, John Cayre, Esq., after a long illness, which he bore with exemplary Christian resignation. This respectable gentleman was the last surviving French refugee, whom the love of religious liberty induced to seek a refuge under the British Government, at a time when the Protestants in his native land suffered much from persecution during the arbitrary reign of Louis XV. He came to Dublin in early youth, and resided there more than half a century; where his innocent inoffensive demeanour, cheerful and polite manners, and kind and courteous disposition, made and secured to him many attached friends. Faithful to the principles in which he had been early trained, and for the maintenance of which he had suffered hardship in youth, he continued through his long life to bear his testimony both in word and in work, in profession and in practice, to the vital influence of pure Bible Christianity. On the breaking up of the French Congregation, in Dublin, at the death of their last pastor, Mr. Subremont, M. Cayre, with other members of the society, joined the Presbyterian Congregation of Strand-street, of which he continued a zealous and attached member. His remains were interred on the morning of Thursday the 30th September, in the burial-ground of the old French Church, in Peter-street. The funeral service was performed by the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, co-pastor of Strand-street Congregation.

SAMUEL ALLEN, Esq., M. D.

Died,—on the 9th October, at Lisconnan, near Dervock, Samuel Allen, Esq. M. D., in the 58th year of his age. The death of this gentleman is deeply and universally regretted, and whilst the rich lament the loss of an affectionate friend, and an enlightened member of their society, the poor have been deprived of a liberal and unwearied benefactor. Ardently attached to the great principle of religious liberty, and opposed to the great doctrines of Orthodoxy, he withdrew from the communion of the church in which he had been brought up, and became a member of the Unitarian Congregation, of Ballymoney. The disease of which he died was protracted and afflictive, but the hopes of the sincere and resigned Christian supported him throughout the whole progress of his suffering.

THOMAS PATTERSON, Esq.

Died,—At Greyabbey, on the—of September, in the—year of his age, Thomas Patterson, Esq. As a general merchant, he was highly respected by a very numerous connexion, in various ranks and employments. In his religious principles he was a decided Unitarian,—acknowledging but one God, the Father; but one religious master, Jesus Christ; and but one rule of faith, the Bible. To his own numerous family his loss is irreparable; and while the Remonstrant Congregation of Greyabbey has been bereft of one of its most zealous and generous members, the cause of civil and religious liberty has been deprived of a steady and upright advocate.

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VOL. VI.

MR. YATES'S ACCOUNT OF THE CELEBRATION
OF THE JUBILEE OF THE REFORMATION AT
GENEVA.

(From the Christian Reformer.)

SIR,—Having been the only English Protestant Dissenter who attended the late Jubilee of the Reformation at Geneva, I gladly avail myself of the opportunity, afforded by your Journal, of giving to my Dissenting brethren in general some account of that memorable and joyous event: and it appears to me that I may best accomplish this object by relating the occurrences as I witnessed them, and, as far as I am able, describing the impressions as they were made on my own mind.

It seems necessary, for the sake of English readers, to remark, as a preliminary observation, that the Swiss celebrate the great events of their history with an ardour of delight and a feeling of citizenship, to which we are perfect strangers. You see each individual showing a lively and personal interest in whatever concerns Switzerland, and, in particular, his own canton. Moreover, as Republicans, they consider the decrees and acts of their government as decreed and performed by themselves; and, their communities being small, their historical knowledge is combined with sympathetic feelings, more like those which unite the members of a family than the usual sentiments of nationality, which may be perceived in the other states of Europe.

Hence the Centenary of the Reformation has been celebrated with much enthusiasm in all the Protestant cantons. The Jubilee took place at Zurich in 1825, at Berne in 1828, at Bâle in 1829, and at Neufchâtel in 1830. But the superiority of Geneva as the seat of religious inquiry, of intellectual cultivation, and of refined taste and moral correctness, as well as the deference paid to its high character by all the most enlightened parts of Europe, has conferred upon its Jubilee a degree of publicity and splendour much surpassing the other portions of the Confederacy.

I have not yet been able to ascertain many particulars respecting the way in which the Genevese commemorated their Reformation a century ago. But, I believe, Jean Alphonse Turretine, a theologian, whose writings I have long held in the greatest admiration, was one of the principal actors on that occasion. The medal which was then struck is kept in many families as an hereditary possession, and it was exhibited in the Town Library, together with a very instructive and interesting collection of portraits, manuscripts, and autographs, illustrative of the local history, which were judiciously displayed during the late commemoration, and examined by the curious eyes of many thousands of persons, both citizens and strangers.

The intention of the Genevese to observe their third secular festival having been formed and published some years ago, I no sooner heard of it than I resolved, if I should have it in my power, to avail myself of a source of gratification, instruction, and improvement, which was likely to be so peculiarly interesting in its character, and which could not possibly present itself a second time. Finding that I was able to accomplish this long-cherished desire, I also resolved to make beforehand a considerable tour in France, both that I might by familiarity with the language be better prepared for understanding all that was about to be said, preached, and transacted at Geneva, and also that the opportunity of previous inquiry into the state of religion, and especially of Protestantism among the French, might enable me to comprehend and appreciate better the communications relative to these topics, which were expected to be made from all parts of Protestant Europe. On presenting myself to the Secretaries appointed to carry into effect the arrangements for the meeting, I was much gratified to find, that although I came to satisfy my own wishes and feelings, and not as a Deputy or a representative of the sentiments of others, I should nevertheless be permitted to enjoy the privileges of a Deputy, since it had been resolved to give tickets of admission not only to the Deputies, but to any clergymen or ministers who expressed a desire to attend the meetings; and I owe it as a mark of respect and gratitude to the conductors of this festival to mention, that at the close of the conferences I was honoured by receiving publicly, together with the De-

puties who attended from distant countries, a copy of the large and exquisitely finished commemoration medal in silver.

The event from which the Genevese date their Reformation, was a public and solemn act of their forefathers renouncing Popery, and resolving to live according to the Gospel. After the subject had been discussed in every possible way during three years, and immediately after a grand public debate, which lasted four weeks, and which was by previous agreement carried on by the leaders of the two opposite parties, the Council of Two Hundred met on the 10th of August (Old Style), in the year 1535,—and being called upon by Farel, the apostle of Reform, to come to a decision, declared that the Mass should be celebrated in the churches no longer. To quote the language of the little work—the composition of which was entrusted to the younger Cellérier, and which was designed to instruct the rising generation of the Genevese in the history and the blessings of their Reformation, to quote this admirable volume—“Piety, independence, prosperity, instruction, industry, good renown, all date for us from August, 1535; since this month our fathers have been able to bless God and say, *After darkness light.*”*

In reference to this important decree of the Genevese people, the day consecrated to the commemoration was Sunday, the 23d of August last. Deputies from various parts of Europe continued to arrive during the whole of the preceding week. But the time of the first general rendezvous was the Friday evening, and it took place in the Botanic Garden, a spot well adapted for such a purpose. This garden is singularly interesting to all the lovers of that delightful science which it is formed to illustrate, because it has been planned and arranged by the most eminent systematic botanist of the present day; here I had the pleasure of meeting his son, M. Alphonse De Candolle, who follows closely in the footsteps of his father, and, if he survives, will nobly sustain his reputation, and who now succeeds him as superintendant of this garden, and Professor of Botany in the Academy. This place, though within the forti-

* Jubilé de la Réformation. Histoires d'autrefois, *Cherhuliez*, Genève et Paris.

fications of the city, has all the beauty and freshness of a rural retreat. Its parterres, which are necessarily formal on account of their scientific destination, but which are for the same reason enriched with the gay and elegant produce of every climate, are encompassed with lofty and verdant forest trees, admitting in their intervals views either of some splendid mansion of an opulent Genevese, or of the towering and more grotesque edifices of the ancient city, or of the eminences connected with the range of the Jura mountains. As none but gentlemen with tickets were admitted into the garden, crowds of the inhabitants, of all ranks, were assembled on the outside, looking down from the overhanging walls, or walking in groups under the trees, and full of curiosity to see and hear of those who had responded to the invitation of their esteemed pastors, and come from many renowned and enlightened countries to render to their Church the homage of the most respectful and cordial congratulation. And it was truly a delightful sight to witness the reception of the strangers by the learned, accomplished, and true-hearted Genevese; to observe the happiness of those whose early friendships had been followed by a many years' separation, who had studied perhaps under the same professors, or at a still earlier period of their lives had received together their first communion, and been thus publicly admitted as members of the church of Christ, after suitable instruction by the same pastor, in the grounds and doctrines of their faith. On this occasion, too, men of eminence and celebrity, who had known one another only by the fame of their talents and good actions, by correspondence, or by their published books, were rejoiced to meet face to face, and to commence a more intimate and lasting friendship.

One of the principal arrangements of the meeting consisted in the Ecclesiastical Conferences, the first of which was held on Saturday, the second on Monday, and the third, which was an adjourned meeting, on Tuesday. The design of these meetings was the communication of sentiments suited to the occasion, between the Church of Geneva and the other Protestant churches of Europe, and that the Deputies might describe the condition and prospects of Protestantism in the different countries which they represented, and might ask and receive advice upon any matters which produced in

them doubt, difficulty, or distress. The place appropriated for them was an ancient and very commodious church, called the Auditory (*L' Auditoire*); and perhaps the style of its architecture might augment the tendency, which I several times experienced, to assimilate this august assembly to the Synods and Councils which we read of in the early history of the Reformation. Near the middle of one side of this spacious vaulted apartment was placed a long table, at which were seated the President and three Vice-Presidents, in the usual costume of the pastors of Geneva; beside them sat the two Secretaries, one of whom, M. Choisy, is a minister of the National Church and a Professor in the Academy, and the other, M. Lutscher, officiates to a numerous congregation of Germans resident in the city. The audiences, including some students of theology, and citizens or strangers of distinction, who, though not Deputies, were admitted as spectators, varied from two to three hundred persons.

The conferences were always opened and concluded by prayer. The business of the first meeting on Saturday commenced with an address from the venerable President, M. Duby, and similar addresses were delivered in the course of the proceedings by the Vice-Presidents, Professor Cellérier, M. Martin, and M. Goty. These four addresses corresponded to the number of the principal nations represented in the congress, viz. Germany, France, the British dominions, and Switzerland.—The address in each instance, in the most cordial manner and in the most eloquent and polished diction, expressed the joy and thankfulness with which the Church of Geneva welcomed the arrival of the representatives of the sister churches in various parts of the world; and, as it called on them in an alphabetical order to deliver their sentiments, the President was answered by the distinguished representatives of the Protestant states of Germany (*Allemagne*), and the three Vice-Presidents severally by those who came from France, from the British dominions, and from Switzerland (*France, Grande Bretagne, Suisse.*)

At these conferences notice was taken, so far as the time allowed, of the written replies sent to the Church of Geneva by those who had not found it convenient to answer by deputation. A Latin letter, highly complimentary, was read, sent by the Protestant Faculty of

Theology in the University of Bonn ; I have since been informed by a friend, recently a student in that University, that the letter was composed by Professor Sack, who, though perfectly Orthodox in his opinions, had a pleasure in representing, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, the profoundest respect and warmest friendship towards the Genevese Church. Another letter in the same strain was read in French, written by command of the king of Prussia from Von Altenstein, his Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. The sovereigns of the other Protestant states of Germany, in conjunction with the Churches and Universities, expressed their congratulations by sending their principal ecclesiastics, who are at the same time men of the first eminence for talent and learning. Ammon, of Dresden, Bretschneider, of Saxe-Gotha, and Röhr, of Saxe-Weimar, who hold at their respective courts the office of First Preacher, sat together, distinguished by their stars and other honorary civic decorations. Dr. Ammon, on hearing his name and title announced, spoke in French ; Dr. Bretschneider addressed the audience in Latin ; and then Dr. Röhr delivered a speech in German, the substance of which was explained by a friend who sat beside him. The addresses of these celebrated scholars will, no doubt, be given to the public when the volume appears containing the *Procès Verbal*, or Report of the festival ; for it was decided, before I left Geneva, at a meeting of the Venerable Company of Pastors and Professors, that an account of the Jubilee should be published in one octavo volume, and the sermons preached in the different churches in another.

It has been made, and it will be made a matter of reproach to the Church of Geneva, that among the foreign deputies on this occasion so distinguished a place was occupied by the German Rationalists. But it is very wrong to conclude from this circumstance, that their sentiments are approved or in any way sanctioned by the Church of Geneva. In consistency with her general spirit of tolerance and her love of religious liberty, she may receive with honour and admiration every man of learning who is honoured and admired in his own country. Her professed principles are those of Protestantism, of the supremacy of the Scriptures, and the right of private judgment in their interpretation.

In consistency with these principles she sent forth her call to all Protestant Europe, and received with generous hospitality and with cordial greeting all who came to answer to her call, without inquiring into their particular creeds. I believe, that in point of fact, the Genevese, both clergy and laity, universally admit the Divine authority of Christianity, as proved by the recorded supernatural appearances, and that the most prevailing view of theology is a moderate Arianism. Nevertheless, when the German Churches, to which they had sent their invitation, and whose fundamental principles are no less comprehensive than their own,—resolved, in conjunction with their civil governors, not only to comply with the request, but to select for the purpose those ecclesiastics who already occupied the highest station among them, the Church of Geneva had only to acknowledge the high honour conferred by those powerful and enlightened countries, and to receive their learned and accomplished citizens with proportionate respect. In short, no one by resorting to this solemn congress avowed attachment to any degree or shade either of heterodoxy or of orthodoxy, but only to truth and perfect religious liberty.

The Protestant ecclesiastical councils, both of France and of the Swiss cantons, are called *consistories*. They are very numerous. Hence the conference was chiefly composed of deputies, both lay and clerical, sent by these bodies, and their addresses occupied a much longer time than the rest. Notwithstanding this circumstance, they abounded in variety, in animation, and in important sentiments and information. They described the origin, progress, and actual state of religious inquiry in the different communities; deplored the spirit of indifference which had invaded many of them, and inquired the means of correcting it. They explained and defended the great principles of Protestantism, and acknowledged the wisdom of the constitution of the Genevese Church, formed, as it is, upon a basis of comprehension, of truly evangelical charity, and occupying that common ground on which all the sincere professors of religion may meet, without enmity and without disguise, may unite together to cherish the emotions of piety and goodness, and may aid each other in the attainment of truth. These addresses from the French and Swiss ministers were in many instances

distinguished by a fervid and high-toned eloquence, and all breathed ardent congratulation to that venerable Church, whose three hundredth birth-day they were met to celebrate. To me it was one source of great satisfaction, in attending this festival, to become acquainted with various ministers, especially from Nismes, Lyons, and the South of France, who, having been educated for the Christian ministry in the Academy of Geneva, are conspicuous for the candour and ingenuousness of their minds, for their extensive information and correct taste, for their zeal in the discharge of pastoral duties, and the excellence of their abilities for the pulpit.

All persons who have been much abroad, and have been competent to form an impartial estimate, admit the fact, that bigotry prevails more in the British Islands than in any other Protestant part of Europe. Hence, though it was to me a subject of regret, it occasioned no surprise that my country was, compared with others, most inadequately represented at this congress. Deputies were there from Genoa, Florence, and St. Petersburg, but not one from England. The Church of Scotland, though a daughter directly sprung from Geneva, nourished and instructed by her, and fostered and protected there in times of persecution, refused compliance with the invitation, because the Church of Geneva is not bound by so narrow a creed as the Westminster Confession; and in adopting this course, the Kirk has been countenanced by only one other body, viz. one of the four consistories of the Canton of Vaud. But, on the other hand, I am happy to observe, that the character of the British Empire was, to a certain extent, redeemed by the scriptural Presbyterians of Ireland, and by the Unitarians of Scotland. The three Presbyterian churches of Ireland, which harmonize with the Church of Geneva in taking the Scriptures alone as the rule of faith and conscience, that is to say, the Southern Synod, the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, appointed a joint meeting to be held in Dublin, at which a letter was prepared and signed, and a deputation commissioned to represent the three constituent bodies at Geneva. It was to me a moment of peculiar interest, when the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, of Dublin, on being called on as the head of this deputation, rose to read

and present the letter, and pronounced an address in a strain of high-toned eloquence, illustrative of the community of principle and feeling between the Church of Geneva and his own constituents. Nor have I been less gratified to learn that the Scottish Unitarian Association agreed also upon a letter addressed by their Secretary, Mr. Harris, of Glasgow, to the Venerable Company, and designed to express their congratulations, and to convey the assurance of their respect and Christian sympathy. This letter and the no less admirable reply of the Venerable Company are published in the *Christian Pioneer* for this month, (pp. 361—365), and in Mr. Harris's sermon preached at Glasgow, on the 23d of August, the day of the commemoration. This discourse I beg, Sir, to recommend to the notice of your readers, not only on account of its general strain of sentiment, but because it explains various particulars relative to the history and constitution of the Genevese Church—a subject upon which, notwithstanding its great interest and importance, the English Unitarians appear to be as wanting in information as the rest of their countrymen.

Before terminating the account of the Ecclesiastical Conferences, it is necessary that I should advert to an interruption of their delightful and edifying spirit, which occurred on the third day. Some time ago, M. Gaussen, a pious, able, and esteemed pastor, seceded from the Church on the same ground on which the General Assembly at Edinburgh and the single consistory of the Canton of Vaud refused to fraternize with it,—the same ground, in fact, on which the highly Calvinistic party in our country find it to be incumbent on them to quit the British and Foreign Bible Society, and to establish “Trinitarian Bible Societies” in opposition to it. M. Gaussen has been supported by a small party, distinguished by their gloomy repulsiveness and fanaticism, and incessant in their attacks on the National Church. During the continuance of the Jubilee, they also held meetings in their new chapel, and they have not failed in their own way to do their utmost to attract notice, and advance their cause on this interesting occasion. Many members of the conference, sharing the sorrows and regret which this secession has occasioned to the Church, and touched at the same time with the deepest admiration of the catholic and yet serious spirit

which pervaded the conferences, thought that this might be a favourable opportunity for healing the unhappy breach, and hence a motion was made and supported, as it appeared to me, chiefly by the Trinitarian members of the conference, proposing that a deputation should go to M. Gaussen and his party to invite and entreat them, in the most affectionate and respectful manner, to join the conference and terminate their opposition to the Church. This matter was discussed in a very able and animated manner, but without any violence or bitterness of feeling on either side, although I observed that the resident pastors and professors of the city certainly did insist very strongly on the hopelessness of the proposed mission, and thus the debate proceeded for some hours, when up rose a youthful looking person, who in a most decisive tone declared the inutility of the scheme, and, if he did not come as an ambassador from the *Rue de Tabogan*, where the Seceders' chapel is situated, was at all events understood to be the organ by which their sentiments were conveyed. Addressing himself to the President and the whole of this venerable and numerous assembly, he told them the articles of his own creed and of the true church, and contrasted these with the Church of Geneva, which, as he said, was sunk in infidelity and going to perdition. He concluded his harangue with a prayer, (or what he intended to be called such) for the conversion of the pastors and the people, which was expressed and delivered in the same hard, bold, peremptory style as the speech which it concluded. This orator was the Rev. John Hartley, a clergyman of the Church of England, and minister of the English Episcopal congregation. When he had ended, not a word was uttered in reply; the whole audience seemed shocked and disgusted by his effrontery: a motion was made to proceed to the order of the day, and thus by one consent the well-intended motion was relinquished. The impression produced on me by Mr. Hartley's speech, and by the reception it met with, was to satisfy me (and I believe it satisfied many others also) of the hopeless fanaticism and intractable violence of the seceding party, and of the perfect tolerance, wisdom, and moderation of the National Church.

A second part of the arrangements of the Jubilee, consisted in the *Fête de la Jeunesse*.

As the Roman youth assumed the Toga Virilis at a certain age, so the Genevese, both boys and girls, and of all ranks, from the poorest to the most opulent, pass at a period of life, which is perhaps too early, into a new social condition. At about fifteen or sixteen years of age, they resort to their pastors for the purpose of being instructed in the evidences, principles, and duties of the Christian religion; and at the end of this course, being sufficiently informed and satisfied upon the subject, they are publicly recognized on a profession of their faith in Christ as members of the Church, and are admitted to receive their first communion. The *Fête de la Jeunesse* included all from six years old to the age of the catechumens. It was designed to impress upon their minds the great event which was celebrated, and at the same time to make it subservient to the highest purposes of moral and religious information. With a view to this object, Professor Cellérier, at the request of the Venerable Company, drew up with great care and skill a description of the state of Geneva before the Reformation, with an account of the characters and efforts of those excellent men by whom its transition to a condition of advancing liberty, intelligence, virtue, and happiness, has been effected. The events of this interesting narrative are always accompanied with an excellent moral, in which the lessons of tolerance and charity are especially inculcated, whilst the author brings continually into view the fundamental principles of Protestantism, as asserted by the Church of Geneva, the supreme value and sole authority of the Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith. Six thousand copies of this book were given to the children, together with the small commemoration medal, finely executed in bronze, and displaying on one side the Bible opened and surrounded with light, together with the abbreviation for "Jesus" and the motto "*Post Tenebras Lux*," which the republic adopted with thankfulness, when they had emerged from the darkness of Popery, and which they retain to the present day. For the purpose of witnessing this distribution, which took place both in the parishes of town and country, I went to the principal church, St. Peter's, which is the ancient cathedral. This spacious edifice presents one of the most beautiful Gothic interiors that I have seen on the Continent. The gay tints cast upon its clustered columns

by the light which streamed through the painted windows, appeared to me to harmonize remarkably well with the scene that met the eye when directed towards the pavement, now resembling one flowery field in consequence of being covered by the children, whose attire was purposely lively and varied so as to be adapted to the festivity. They occupied the central parts of the area near the pulpit, and were encompassed by their parents and friends, looking on with affectionate enthusiasm. The children sang hymns adapted to the occasion, in which they had been previously instructed, and neither at this time nor at any other part of the ceremonies was the grand organ of St. Peter's deficient in its solemn office. Placed according to the usual practice on the Continent, over the great door at the end of the nave, it seemed to dispense its tones, however commanding or however melodious, with equal ease in every recess of the cathedral; and although I always listened to it with admiration, yet I do not recollect that it ever produced a finer effect than in the service preceding the distribution of the books and medals, when its pealing tones alternated with the soft and sweet choruses of the children. Besides the music, this religious service consisted of prayer, with an address to the children from the pulpit, which was very animated, affectionate, and solemn. This exhortation suggested to me the remark, which often recurred, that in the minds of the Genevese piety and patriotism unite into one sentiment. "*Soyez bons Genevois,*" said the preacher, "*et pour cela soyez bons Chrétiens.*" Their church being a truly national church, to which they are all attached, and their religion being constantly applied to direct them in the discharge of all public as well as private duties, the love of their country grows into a sentiment not only enthusiastic, but sacred and profound. Duty to God in them perpetually coincides with obedience to the laws, attachment to peace, liberty, and order, and a regard to their country's prosperity and virtuous fame.

The amusements of the children, which were intended to follow the ceremony now described, were in some measure interrupted or delayed in consequence of the weather. They consisted in displays of fire-works, including the ascent of fire balloons, and in singing the national airs, dancing, and marching in procession. For

these purposes they assembled near some of the neighbouring villages. Those ladies and gentlemen who did not contribute to the universal festivity by performing at the oratorio on the Sunday evening, or in various other ways, were of great use in marshalling the children and tending them with a view to their innocent enjoyment, and all spoke of this part of the festival with the most lively interest.

Having said thus much of the *Fête de la Jeunesse*, I now proceed to give some account of those devotional services and exhortations from the pulpit, in which the public celebration of great events of the national history more properly consisted.

By desire of the Venerable Company, one of its members, M. Bouvier, composed a Preparatory Service, which was performed in all the churches at five o'clock on Saturday evening, and a Thanksgiving Service, which was read at three o'clock on the Sunday, so as to conclude the public religious exercises of the day. I will extract a considerable portion of the address to the people, contained in the Preparatory Service, as adapted to give, so far as mere writing can do it, some idea of the style of the exhortations which were delivered on this occasion. After a strong picture of the corrupt, ignorant, and hopeless state of the Christian Church before the Reformation, the address proceeds as follows :—

“The Lord raises up a strong man and mighty, who resembles a violent hail-storm, which breaks all before it, or a prodigious overflowing of waters ; with his hand he throws to the earth the crown of pride, and he treads it under his feet. This man was Luther. He calls to Germany ; Europe answers him. Crowds of labourers run to his harvest, and ancient errors fall before them like the wheat under the sickle. They strike to the right and to the left, and overthrow whatever exalts itself against the knowledge of God. They require that nothing should be taught which cannot be justified by the Scriptures. The powerful ones of the earth in vain league against them : the evils inflicted on them only serve to make their faith more admirable, and to extend it like a flame. Sweden, Denmark, the Low Countries, England, Scotland, with parts of France, Hungary, Silesia, and Bohemia, ardently receive the principles of the Reformation. It penetrates into Switzer-

land, our dear and beloved country. The excellent Zuingli had there given the signal for it, as Luther did elsewhere: Haller, Bucer, *Ecolampadius*, Bullinger, answer to the appeal. Zurich, Berne, Bâle, Neuchâtel awake, and we awake in our turn—we who are the least among the cities of Judah; they stretch out to us their hands, and may God bless them for it. Children of the Gospel, driven from France or other countries by persecutions, which in the hand of God became means of salvation for other nations, come to us in great numbers: William Farel, with his burning zeal, his knowledge of the Scriptures, and his greatness of soul; Froment, with his intrepidity; Viret, with his eloquence and his spirit of piety; later, and to crown the work, Calvin, with his knowledge, his genius, and his rigour; Beza, with his talents and his great renown;—illustrious names, ever dear to the hearts of Protestants and Genevese, which will find defenders, even among their adversaries, as long as there shall remain any spark of honour and loyalty in the world: these are our fathers in the faith, who were, after God, our light and our glory.

“There was something grand in seeing these men, without property or any outward advantage, who had renounced all, because they esteemed it their riches to be poor for Jesus Christ; alone and drawing multitudes after them; without support and yet full of confidence; surrounded by gainsayers and persecutions, which did not arrest them for an instant. Even life is not dear to them, provided they finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they have received from the Lord Jesus. ‘Where are you going?’—‘I know not,’ said Farel, ‘I only know that I am constrained by the desire of my heart to enter on the work of the ministry. I know that crosses and tribulations await me, but I am not afraid.’ ‘I am Christ’s ambassador,’ said he to those who wished to load him with injuries and to stop his mouth, ‘I cannot but preach the truth to such as are willing to hear.’

“Yes! fear nothing, little flock! for it has pleased God to give you the kingdom. Your children shall be known among the nations: all who see them shall recognize them as a family whom the Lord hath blessed. Victory shall be the name of thy walls, and glory that of thy gates. Thy sun shall go down no more, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

“God truly showed himself among them. The first seeds had been cast in 1532 upon this uncultivated and stubborn soil: scarce two years had passed away, when the fields were white and ready for the harvest. In the two solemn disputations of February, 1534, and of May, 1535, these faithful servants of God displayed so admirable a presence of mind, repelled objections with so much force, quoted the Scriptures with so much aptitude, and established the true sense with so much exactness and clearness, that it was visible to all that the spirit of the Father was with them. ‘He who justifieth me is at hand; who will dare to contend against me?’ Their adversaries confessed themselves conquered by the evidence of the truth; the ancient worship was abolished August the 12th, 1535, and the Edict of the Reformation was published soon afterwards. As in the time of Josiah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and the people, went up to the house of the Lord, they read the words of the book of the covenant, and engaged to keep with all their heart and soul the commandment written in the book.

“From this day our fathers were permitted to draw water in abundance from the fountain of salvation. This church, so contemptible and deformed, recovered the simplicity and purity of its origin; pastors after the heart of God; a living faith instead of superstition; the knowledge of all that can illuminate and improve the mind instead of ignorance and barbarism; holiness instead of holy frauds; God instead of men in all things. And, what is still more wonderful, this Reform has tended to regenerate even that church which made it necessary, and which repelled it. Under the shade of the Reformation we have become and have remained a free people. Our twin liberties were born and grew together under the eye of God, holding each other by the hand. Blessed day of refreshment and redemption, birth-day of Geneva, we will love thee, we will celebrate thee, thou shalt be the most beautiful in our lives!

“But Christians, rejoice not in your earthly advantages, so much as that your names are written in heaven. ‘Let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he knoweth me, saith the Lord; for therein do I delight.’

“Worthily to celebrate the Jubilee of our Reformed Country, let us return with one accord to that faith,

that religious life, that Christian unity, which have made it what it is."

After this notice of the Preparatory Service, I shall now conclude with a short account of the proceedings of the day of celebration itself.

At break of day the bells of all the churches, both in town and country, rang for a quarter of an hour. This was to welcome the arrival of the day. The printed programme, published to announce the arrangements of the Jubilee, adds the following remark: "Let the first thought of the faithful, when they open their eyes to the light, be to raise their soul to God and to give him thanks."

At nine o'clock and at twelve, sermons were preached in all the churches of the city, or, as they here called, "*the four temples*," by ministers who had been fixed upon for the purpose, according to the usual practice of the Church. I went, however, with some friends, to attend the early service of the day in one of the neighbouring villages, called Chêne, where M. Martin is the pastor. The "temple" is new and admirably formed for Protestant worship. Its shape is oval, with the pulpit on one side. It has in front a portico with a colonnade; and when we reached the avenue leading to it, we were delighted to observe the columns wreathed with flowers, festoons suspended in the intervals between them, and gay oleanders, geraniums, and other beautiful plants in pots, ranged in great profusion over the cornice. M. Martin afterwards told me, that his parishioners had contrived and executed this tasteful decoration, so expressive of the universal joy, without his knowledge. The edifice was completely crowded; and though the chief mass consisted of the peasantry, yet others belonged to some of the most cultivated families of Geneva,—I might add, of Europe: for, having on the evening of this same day the pleasure of being at Professor Munier's, where all the strangers assembled by a general invitation, and being introduced to the celebrated historian and political economist, Sismondi, I found that, as an inhabitant of Chêne, he had been at church as usual: and here I may notice a circumstance which has often struck me, that there is no place where religion is held in such esteem, by men of high intellectual endowments, as at Geneva. In France religion is almost universally neglected and

despised, not only by those who are eminent as the patrons and cultivators of science, but by the far more numerous classes of persons who have received the most moderate portion of philosophical or literary information. This is every where the natural result of a system which is based on fraud and intellectual degradation. Under the opposite plan of mental liberty and sincerity, in which Christianity is regarded as recommending itself to the scrutiny and voluntary acceptance of every individual, and as a practical institution designed to make men good and happy, and to prepare them for that eternity which it reveals, men of the most exalted genius and extensive acquirements may render to it the undisguised homage of their reverence and love, feeling continually that the subject elevates and expands their intellect, and not that their intellect confers dignity upon the subject. Thus do I account for the becoming way in which religion is treated by the *literati* of Geneva, and of no other country with which I am acquainted. Having been led into this digression from the circumstance of having Sismondi as a fellow-worshipper in the village church, I will only add, that the preaching and devotional offices fully correspond with the interesting and sublime objects of the celebration. On this and other occasions, at which I was present, tears of emotion and transport in the pastor produced the same manifestation of feeling in his hearers. Here also I found an opportunity to admire the perfect tolerance of this admirable Church. The village of Chêne is divided by a stream ; the portion of it which is on the side of Savoy is Catholic, and its population is exceedingly inferior to the other part, not only in numbers but in wealth and all that constitutes comfort and civilization. Nevertheless, one of the priests had been diligent and exemplary ; and as he was lately dead, the Protestant pastor, at the same time that he called forth by his eloquent and fervid address the joy and thankfulness of his flock for the blessings of the Reformation, promoted the most equitable, kind, and indulgent state of feeling towards the Catholics, and beautifully adverted to the character and labours of their neighbour, the priest, "whose life," said he, "edified you all, and whose death has afflicted you all."

From this scene of beauty and comparative retirement, we hastened to return within the walls of the ancient and crowded city ; and as a contrast to the rural temple, I repaired to the grandest and noblest of the sacred edifices of Geneva, the Cathedral. Here my distinguished and most kind and excellent friend, Professor Chenevière, had been appointed to preach at noon, and I was most anxious to hear him. The reader will easily conceive, that on an occasion which had excited the sympathy and interest of the most enlightened parts of Europe, and the most lively joy, enthusiasm, and gratitude of the Genevese themselves,—in a temple venerable from its antiquity and historical associations, imposing by its vastness, and admirable for its beauty and proportions,—with the sublime accompaniments of a majestic organ responding to the national psalmody, simple, but impressive and endeared by habit,—and before a congregation which filled all the galleries and extended to the very doors, which consisted of several thousand persons, and which comprised in that countless assembly many individuals of high renown for their talents and learning,—all this would have been incongruous and incomplete, had not the pulpit been occupied by a man who was highly beloved and esteemed both by his brethren in the ministry and by his fellow-citizens, whose voice, action, and utterance, were in correspondence with the surrounding scene, and whose mental resources were competent to so great a task. In these circumstances, Chenèvière's preaching appeared to me to fix every eye and to engage and occupy every soul. Nothing could exceed the impression as he called to their recollection the history of their deliverance, the time when their forefathers destroyed their very habitations, swept away the beautiful suburbs of the city, in order that by retiring within the walls they might repel their Popish adversaries, and as he appealed distinctly and in succession to the magistrates, the pastors, the young, the heads of families, and the whole nation, to preserve and adorn the Protestant profession.

The different sermons preached in the morning, of course, became the topic of conversation, and various opinions were formed upon their respective merits. I heard perhaps the highest praise bestowed on that preached at St. Gervais, by Professor Munier. At the

cathedral of St. Peter, M. Diodati, an orthodox Trinitarian, universally esteemed for his talents and learning, his useful diligence and his piety, preached at nine o'clock, and Chenevière at twelve. At the conclusion of the service, I was talking with a minister from a distant canton who heard both; and though he agreed with me in admiring Chenevière, he said he had been still more impressed by Diodati. As far as I could form a judgment from what I heard, Diodati's address was more touching and pathetic—Chenevière's more remarkable for energy, and more rich in historical allusions.

There was yet another most gratifying and decisive demonstration of the universal sentiment on the evening of the 23d. This was the illumination of the city, which was not suggested by the committee or directed by the magistrates, but was the spontaneous act of the people. Besides the illumination of nearly all the fronts of the houses, pyramids and arches of flowers and verdure, with coloured lamps, were erected in the streets and open places. Among the transparencies was one at the house of a Jew with the inscription, "*La Liberté et la Tolérance.*" Many of the Catholics also illuminated. Indeed it has been one of the most peculiar and delightful features of this religious festival, that, whilst the Protestants have indulged their gratitude and exultation without any sentiment of bitterness or violence towards the Catholics, many of the Catholics, on the other hand, have manifested their kind and generous sympathy with the Protestants. They are candid and well-informed enough to perceive the necessity of the Reformation, and to acknowledge its beneficial influence even on their own more ancient Church. Many of the priests wished on this account to join in the commemoration at Geneva. Forty were prevented from coming by the interposition of their superior, the Bishop of Constance. Such is the conciliatory power of a church which is maintained in alliance with a wise, impartial, and paternal government, and which is constituted on a foundation of knowledge, usefulness, sincerity, and freedom.—What a contrast to that violent and blind bigotry, that implacable hatred, which in the British Islands subsists between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, although these two churches comparatively speaking, differ little from each other, either in principle or in practice.

Another circumstance occurred on the same evening, which I shall mention, as it illustrates the spirit and influence of the Genevese, and the relation of friendship and affection in which the people stand to their pastors. None of the ministers are more loved and respected than those of St. Gervais. At the usual hour the housewives were preparing supper, which commonly consists, among the Swiss, of salad and other simple dishes, when the idea occurred, that, as the street was light as day, and brilliant with the expression of their common joy, they might make it a supper-room for the whole parish; and no sooner was the thought conceived, than they spread their tables under the open sky, and made ready to enjoy their meal together, as one great family. Their pastors were sought for to preside and to bless the entertainment. One of them, my valued friend, M. Chastel, had already retired to his chamber, but hastened to answer their call. By the addresses of some of the assembled parishioners to their pastors, and the *improptu* speeches of the pastors in reply, a renewed expression was given to the feelings which glowed in every heart.

It was observed, that on this evening, when the streets were thronged with gazing multitudes, and when the illuminations with its various emblems referred to the differences of religious profession, there was no disturbance of any kind, and no interference of the police. Indeed the remark might be to a great extent applied to the state and habits of the people throughout the year in this well-ordered city. I believe a beggar is never seen there, although they swarm on the confines of France and Savoy; a suitable provision for the deserving poor constitutes an important part of the ecclesiastical establishment, and supersedes mendicity. Crimes also are extremely rare, and, as I am informed, are scarcely ever committed by the Protestant Genevese.

I do not say therefore, that the Genevese could possibly do without a police and a system of criminal jurisdiction, or that the ecclesiastical edifices can ever supersede the use of prisons, jails, and penitentiaries; but I do not hesitate to express it as my opinion that among them, to a far greater extent than in any other country, the religion of the state is the religion of the nation; the Voluntary System is the System of the Government; an unforced, sincere, and enlightened

piety anticipates and aids the requirements of public justice and the force of law; the only Dissenters are those who wish to exercise lordship over their brethren; the pastors, without being the objects of the unrestricted choice of the people, are the objects of their warm and respectful attachments; the love of country blends into one grand idea with the love of God; and the duties and trials of earth become the daily preparatives for the hopes and blessedness of heaven.

Hoping that this faint memorial may convey to your readers some portion of those impressions which I wish to remain upon my own mind to my dying hour, I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

JAMES YATES.

P. S. Whilst I have been writing this account, a friend has undertaken to translate into English the work written by M. Cellérier, and presented to the children. It may not be improper thus to invite the communications of any bookseller or other person, who may be disposed to aid in the publication.

A PANEGYRIC ON SCRIPTURE.

A THOUGHTFUL mind can hardly entertain a doubt, that God has exercised a providential care over the moral as well as the material operations of nature: yet were it not for Scripture we should have no authentic evidence, that he had ever superintended the spiritual concerns of his creatures. Though the Deity never “left himself without a witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness;” yet to an inattentive observer, he seemed “to suffer all nations to walk in their own ways;” and with those who do not admit the testimony of the Bible, it must still remain a subject of debate, whether he who so bountifully provides for the temporal wants of his children, and is himself of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, ever extended his plan of providence to their moral, spiritual, and eternal interests. It cannot, however, admit of a doubt, that such an interference would be perfectly consonant with his nature; and if in any case we can ascertain, that a particular line of conduct would be the natural result of his attributes, we may safely

presume that it has been adopted ; for whatever variety and inconsistency may take place in the character of human agents, it is impossible that the Supreme Being should act otherwise than his most wise and gracious attributes require. In a Being of infinite perfection, we may depend upon this harmony between principle and conduct with as much certainty, as upon any of the laws of nature.

The view which the Bible gives of this subject is, that in consequence of the propensity of mankind to vice and idolatry, God selected a particular family, and the nation into which it afterward expanded, for the purpose of preserving a knowledge of our origin and our Creator ; that by a peculiar interposition of Providence, this people was retained in the knowledge of the great principles of religion ; contributed to keep alive some principles of piety in surrounding nations, and finally became the instrument of manifesting the Messiah, and publishing a system of morality and religion, calculated to render all mankind happy and immortal.

This account encourages us to look for some extraordinary consequences of such a dispensation. It leads us to inquire for some signal interpositions of Providence, to counteract that propensity which all history tells us was so predominant. Far from being startled at such preternatural events, as are recorded in the Bible, we are naturally led to look to the chosen nation for a form of government, and a course of conduct very different from what we find in other countries ; and in particular, to expect in the literary and religious compositions of the Jews, a strain of sentiment consonant to their opportunities and destination. We may find their conduct very different from their principles ; for this is the lot of humanity. We may discover that their history is encumbered with misrepresentation and fable ; for this also is the unavoidable consequence of prejudice and pride. We may be shocked by savage and inhuman sentiments, uttered by their most distinguished characters ; for such is the inconsistency of man. But allowing for all the errors of their historians, and the vices of their heroes, we may still expect to find manifest traces of those characteristic features which must distinguish the government, history, character and compositions of such a people from those of

other nations. If we are in possession of any considerable number of their books, written in different ages, we shall look for vestiges of their peculiar opinions and situation throughout them all. This we may reasonably demand. The question is, whether these things are to be found in Scripture; if so, we may conclude, there was something supernatural in the history they record.—If we find every thing on a level with similar productions of other nations in ancient times, we shall be induced to suspect the reality of such high pretensions.

To these pretensions their historical records entirely correspond. There is an uniformity of principle and character in them, which is perfectly consistent with our expectations; and giving up to the most incredulous whatever inferior circumstances may shock their belief, there are still such grand and essential facts remaining, as can neither be supposed to be fictitious, nor accounted for without the admission of divine agency.

Their form of government is singular in its kind, peculiarly adapted to the professed object for which the people were appointed, the maintenance of true principles concerning God; an object that indicates no human policy, and is worthy of the care of Providence.

The character of the Jewish nation is so different from every other, as to be in itself, even to the present day, a standing miracle, and a confirmation of their history; and the completion of the plan by the birth of the Messiah, and the prevalence of his religion, so agreeable to the principles of their most ancient traditions, yet so offensive to their own prejudices, is a fact, that indicates such consistency in the whole system, as human power or design could not possibly have any share in producing.

But what I wish principally to illustrate on the present occasion, is the peculiarities of their literary remains, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. These are numerous, composed at various periods, as singular as the people themselves, and replete with such statements as accord with the expectations which their history had excited, but differ radically from the opinions of every other people; sentiments totally discordant from the principles of the ancient world, yet surpassing the most sublime conceptions of modern philosophers, not only capable of

enlightening idolatrous ages, but also of being the model and standard of sacred compositions to this day.

In the early writings of every country, we find attempts to account for the origin of the earth: and there is no point on which such extravagant theories have been devised. In matters of this kind, which are antecedent to human experience, and above the natural capacity of man, we find little difference between the dreams of the most enlightened and most barbarous nations, between the reveries of the learned in Indostan, Greece, or Rome: hence we may conclude, that if a cosmogony or theory of the earth be not a subject to which the human understanding is inadequate, it is at least one that an ignorant people would not be likely to comprehend without some supernatural assistance. Let any one then compare with the wild imaginations of the most enlightened heathen nations, that sentence with which Scripture is introduced, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

This sublime idea of a Being, who could create the heavens as well as the earth, is supported throughout the whole Bible. This expression does not represent an accidental flight of fancy, but a grand, consistent principle. We hear of no other God from Genesis to Revelations: all the civilized nations in the world are now unanimously agreed, that there is no other; and to this day there has not been found in the annals of mankind a genius who could give a more sublime or consistent idea of the Supreme Being, or a more rational and sublime account of creation, than the Bible has given. I speak not of those minuter incidents, in which, agreeably to the custom of the eastern nations in ancient times, men metaphorically introduce the name of God to dignify their own opinions and actions; but of the general tenor of Scripture from Moses to Malachi, and from Matthew to John.

Even this liberal use of the name of Jehovah among the Jewish historians arises from another circumstance, in which Scripture differs from every human composition. Various and inconsistent were the opinions of the ancient philosophers concerning divine Providence; some denying that the gods ever suffered their tranquillity to be disturbed by human affairs; others delivering the administration of the world into the hands of fate or fortune; and some perhaps conceiving, that every

mortal head was under the special care of a guardian genius. But on these subjects there is no fluctuation in the Bible. From the history of the creation of the world to the prophecy of its dissolution, every thing is ascribed to one God. The rise and fall of empires, the maintenance of pure religion, and the minuter transactions of private life are all referred to the Lord. Every civil, religious, moral, and domestic duty is enforced by considerations drawn from his attributes, from his infinite power, wisdom and goodness, from his holiness, omniscience and omnipresence, from such sublime topics as it never entered into the hearts of any other people to conceive; which are nevertheless now universally admitted to be just, and undeniable. Upon the same principles the Jewish government was formed, and to the maintenance of them it most eminently contributed.

As the supernatural origin and special purpose of the Jewish constitution warrant us in expecting a preternatural order of events in their history; so the conduct, manners and language of this people would lead us to presume, that their government had a divine original, and had been founded for the accomplishment of some grand and important purpose.

With respect to their literary remains, their transcendant merit cannot appear so manifest to any as to one well versed in classical antiquity. Let any one compare the hymns and odes of the most renowned poets of Greece and Rome, with the Psalms of David, the book of Job, or the strains of Isaiah: I speak not only of sublimity of thought, and poetical embellishments; but more particularly of the object of their praise; and how puerile do they appear; elegant trifles no doubt; ingenious fables and sublime fictions; but still fictions, fables and trifles! Whence then was the knowledge of these divine truths communicated to the Israelites? Did they learn it during those tedious ages which they spent in a secluded corner of the land in Egyptian bondage? Did they find it written on the sands of Arabia, which they traversed for forty years, in the condition of other wandering tribes? They were not taught it by the idolatrous and savage people of Canaan; nor by the neighbouring nations, from whom they were separated by the insurmountable barriers of laws, customs, and national antipathy. This knowledge

they had not to convey ; and this the Israelites possessed before they were slaves in Egypt, wanderers in Arabia, or conquerors of Canaan. They could derive it from no other source, than that to which it is traced in Genesis, the early communications of God to the primitive generations of men, and particularly, the chosen seed of Abraham.

To this pre-eminence Scripture is entitled, though we read its sublimest strains in a prose translation. While persons ignorant of the classical languages, wonder at the applause bestowed on the Greek and Roman writers, the Sacred books are the only works that will bear translation ; and even through that imperfect medium, they are acknowledged by the finest scholars, to exceed the noblest works of classical antiquity.

There is no subject on which the wise and good, from Indus to the Tiber, so much excelled, as morals ; and in their disquisitions and precepts on this branch of philosophy, some of them approach even to the excellence of Scripture. Why ? Whence do you think proceeds this difference between their morals and their religion ? In my apprehension it arose from this, that on this important part of knowledge all men are inspired. " The inspiration of the Almighty has given us this understanding." As God has inspired the brutes with animal instincts, so he has inspired all mankind with conscience, with certain moral principles, essential to their peace and happiness both in a state of nature, and in society, both here and hereafter ; but though he has given us sufficient intimations of his nature in his works ; though his eternal power of Godhead might be clearly seen in the things which he has made, yet he did not think proper to make religious knowledge a part of our nature. Here he left us to the exercise of our faculties ; and lest we should neglect this exertion of our powers as actually happened, he guarded against this fatal neglect by particular Revelations. But even in morals there is an essential difference between heathen philosophy and revealed religion. This difference consists in the motives or principles of action ; and this is so important a distinction, that I shall dwell on it in the sequel of this essay.

To do justice to the subject in the sequel of any essay, would be a vain attempt. I shall therefore pass over the fundamental doctrines, such as, the existence,

nature, and character of God ; his providence and revelations ; the certainty of a future state, and the condition of salvation, with the many animating and awful sanctions peculiar to Scripture, and calculated to have the most powerful effect upon our hearts and conduct : and shall only speak of those profound, practical and peculiar principles of morals, by which the Bible is distinguished from every other composition.

One striking instance of superiority is, that morality is every where connected with religion ; and it appears both from reason and experience that without a reference to religious motives moral precepts have little force. As laws are vain without morals ; so are morals without piety.

Accordingly all our duties are enforced by the love of God. This principle, so rational, so impressive and endearing, was entirely unknown to idolatry. Yet it is calculated to supply the defects of every other motive by operating in secret with as much force as in public ; and in Scripture it is made the basis of every duty. From it love, goodwill, and justice to man flow, as fertilizing streams from a common fountain. When this principle is enforced by Christian topics, as it is so beautifully by St. John, it may be said to constrain us, though by the silken cords of love, to walk according to the will of our Heavenly Father, who hath called us to his kingdom of glory. Thus are the two great commandments, love to God and love to man, which had no connection in ancient philosophy, bound together by the strictest ties.

Another principle peculiar to Scriptural morality, and revolting to Pagan prejudices is, that this love should extend to all mankind, to those nations which we call our natural enemies ; to those tribes which are considered as destined to slavery, to those individuals, whom we never saw, and to those who treat us with incessant enmity and scorn. This puts an end to every apology for revenge, retaliation, envy, and even resistance to trifling wrongs, so as to produce bitterness or wrath.

It is also a maxim of evangelical morals, that to promote the will of God should be the rule of our conduct, and to obtain his approbation our sole ambition. This not only excludes, but condemns glory, ambition, vanity, popularity, and other favourite passions and pro-

pensities, as motives of conduct. It is at variance with what the ancients considered as the summit of human excellence; and it exalts into the highest rank of virtues, those meek and humble, those benevolent, patient, and forgiving dispositions, which an ungrateful world is so prone to treat with scorn.

While we are thus taught to look to the will of God as the regulating principle of our lives, and to behold the praise or contempt of mankind as in-itself indifferent, even in the most public situations; we are enjoined to examine our own hearts; to consider "thought as action;" not only to avoid secret as much as open vices; but to consider our most private sentiments as all "set in the light of the Divine countenance:" and to look upon purity of thought as the essence of virtue; and while we are instructed to exercise so severe a scrutiny into our own hearts, we are commanded to display the greatest lenity in our judgment of others, and the most delicate tenderness to their prejudices.

To do to others as we think it reasonable that they should do to us, is one of those masterly precepts which extort assent; one of those practical principles, for the neglect of which we can devise no excuse: one of those profound maxims of wisdom, which may be safely adopted as universal rules of life.

Another which vies with it in wisdom and universality of application is, "never to do evil that good may come." This like the former will stand the severest test, by which any practical rule can be tried. It will appear to be most wise and important in the most perplexing seasons. Nothing more is necessary to prevent or to remove the distractions of the world than this, that every man should "do to others as he would have them do to him," and that in the most difficult circumstances, no man should ever "do evil that good may come."

Without enumerating any more of the distinguishing principles of action inculcated in the Bible, I shall give a brief recapitulation of what has been proved.

It appears to be the natural conclusion from the divine attributes, that God would include the moral interests of mankind in his scheme of Providence; and it is asserted in Scripture that he has actually done so. The agreement of that history with our expectations is a confirmation of both. But if the plan of Providence was actually such, it must have produced visible and striking

effects among the chosen people; and we have a right to expect traces of them in the Bible, which gives an account of that dispensation. We have accordingly found that the only people who ever had any knowledge of true religion, or produced men that acted under its influence, was this very people whose history we have there recorded—that they were in possession of this knowledge of the Creator, creation and government of the world in their rudest and most ignorant state: and that they still exist, adhering to the same principles, a perpetual miracle, and a living monument of their history:—that their nation was, agreeably to intimations in their earliest records, the means of publishing the Christian religion, though they perversely rejected it themselves—that from them alone has proceeded all the true religion that now exists upon the face of the earth; and that in their historical and religious books alone are these principles to be found.

On the whole, such an interposition of Providence was to be expected; the Bible tells us that it actually took place: the particulars of that history agree with our expectation, and the phenomenon of this people existing to this day, as a nation, though dispersed over the whole world in a state of contempt; and of a religion emanating from them, which is now professed by all civilized countries, that have had an opportunity of knowing it: these phenomena are tantamount to a thousand arguments to prove the great facts of sacred history; and not to be accounted for on any other supposition than the truth of those facts.

This is the enlarged and comprehensive view which should be taken of divine subjects; and, though we should grant every thing that is commonly urged against the Bible, these great truths will never be shaken.

NEMO.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GENEVA.

[As much of the present number of the *BIBLE CHRISTIAN* is occupied with Mr. Yates' account of the late commemoration at Geneva; and as Mr. Y. complains of the prevalent ignorance of the subject, it has seemed advisable to insert a short sketch of the history of the church in that city, since the reformation. The Editor not being aware of the existence of any historical outline of the required description, and of suitable length, has compiled the following from the best sources to which he has had access. Among these it would be unjust not to specify the articles on "*Nonsubscription to Creeds*," which appeared in the *Christian Moderator*; and which were acknowledged as his productions by Dr. BRUCE, in the last number of that work.]

I. BEFORE the period of the Reformation, Geneva was a small, ill-regulated, and turbulent community; subject by turns to the tyranny of its bishop, the domination of the duke of Savoy, and the misrule of its own burghers. It received but little respect or consideration from foreigners, and exercised no influence whatever on the general mind. In the year 1531, the city was fortunate enough to shake off the yoke of the Savoyard, and to compel its bishop to abstain from all future attempts to establish a dominion over its secular affairs. In this struggle, the inhabitants were aided by their neighbours of Berne and Friburg; and an amicable intercourse has ever since subsisted between Geneva and those cities, which were the fosterers of her infant liberty. To this circumstance Geneva was indebted for the promulgation of the doctrines of the reformation among her citizens; for it was in the train of certain ambassadors from the states of Friburg and Berne, that the venerable FAREL, her first protestant pastor, arrived within her walls, in the year 1533. He was a man of primitive zeal and simplicity of character; who disdained all compromise or concealment in matters of conscience. Accordingly, during his residence, he ceased not to proclaim to the people of Geneva those principles, which, as a Reformer he professed, viz; that corruptions existed in the church of Rome, not only affecting matters of discipline, but also of doctrine and morality:—that it was the duty of all men to labour in their several spheres for the correction of these abuses:—that the standard of pure religious truth and duty is to be found in the sacred scriptures; wherein alone, are the genuine principles of

Christianity authoritatively set forth;—that Christians are entitled to apply this standard, for themselves, according to their own judgment, without any regard to the dictates of the church;—and that nothing is to be made binding upon the assent or consciences of men, which is not agreeable to, or expressly declared in the sacred volume. Acting upon these principles, Farel denounced many of the doctrines of the church of Rome, as unscriptural and untrue; and powerfully urged his hearers to renounce these corruptions. It appears that the bold and plain preaching of Farel was attended, at first, with some disorders. Several popular commotions ensued, accompanied with loss of life. These tumults were quelled by the prudence and firmness of the magistrates and the principal citizens: but the important question which the missionary had started was still zealously canvassed; and his tenets were either warmly impugned or eagerly defended, according to the views which different individuals were disposed to take. By these discussions, some evils of a minor kind were, doubtless, generated; but yet on the whole, truth was promoted, and the principles of the reformation advanced; until at length on the 22d. day of August, 1535, two years after the arrival of Farel in Geneva, the citizens, assembled in full council, after much debate, solemnly and deliberately repudiated the authority of the Roman church as usurped;—renounced all subjection to her, either in discipline or doctrine;—and determined to take their part and lot with the advocates of the reformed religion. This is the event of which the church of Geneva celebrated the three-hundredth anniversary in the jubilee of the 23d of August last.

Farel was earnestly solicited to remain at Geneva as the pastor of the church; and deemed it right to comply: but as his advancing years rendered him incapable of superintending alone, so important a charge, he adopted VIRET for his colleague; and in 1536, selected JOHN CALVIN to that office. This celebrated man had been driven from France, his native country, by persecution; and after various wanderings, settled in Geneva as coadjutor to Farel. He was soon afterwards banished on account of his intermeddling temper; but was recalled in 1641, six years after the public adoption of the reformation in that city; and continued there till his death.

Calvin was one of the most illustrious men of his own or of any other age : learned, acute, eloquent, intrepid and indefatigable, he combined in himself all the personal qualities that are required in one who is destined to regulate mighty movements, and to controul events. As he had rejected the tenets of the church of Rome, so he felt himself at liberty to innovate upon the system both of discipline and doctrine which had been established by preceding reformers. Soon after his settlement in Geneva, he succeeded, notwithstanding some opposition, in re-modelling the whole ecclesiastical polity of his church, and reducing it to that form which it still retains, and which in these countries, is known by the name of presbyterianism. Not satisfied with this, he sought to procure the church of Geneva to be adopted as a model of discipline and worship by all other protestant communities; and so great was his influence, that he prevailed on the churches of the reformation in Switzerland, France, the Low Countries, Hesse Cassel, Brandenburg, Holstein, Baden, Anhalt, and some of the Imperial Cities of Germany, to discard their former methods, and to adopt those approved at Geneva. Knox, the reformer of Scotland, was the friend and disciple of Calvin; and introduced into his native country the system which his teacher had established. From Scotland it was imported into Ireland a little more than two centuries ago. It was at one time predominant in England; and still exists largely in the United States of America.

For the promotion of learning among the reformed, Calvin founded the Academy or University of Geneva; in which he, and BEZA, and several other eminent scholars lectured upon theology and other sciences, to the students who resorted in crowds from all parts of Europe, to hear the instructions of so illustrious a teacher. This institution continues to this day, with undiminished usefulness and reputation.

Whilst he gave thus much of his attention to the externals of the church, he laboured still more assiduously to establish its faith upon his own peculiar principles. These were, in several material points, different from the tenets of Zwingle, Œcolampadius, and other Helvetic reformers who had preceded himself: but he doubtless believed them to be perfectly conformable to the word of God. In illustration of his theological

views, he composed a series of works, which will ever remain, monuments of his erudition and genius. Among these may be especially mentioned his "*Institution of the Christian Religion*," a book of singular ability, as must be acknowledged even by those who differ most widely from the author's sentiments; a doctrinal "*Catechism*" for the use of his church; and a learned "*Commentary*" upon all the books of scripture, except the Revelation. In these and all his other publications he insisted strongly upon that system of doctrine which has been called after the name of its ablest defender, *Calvinism*: and from its important articles, he would not tolerate any departure. The exertions of Calvin, in diffusing his opinions, were almost super-human. He preached in public every day in each alternate week, seldom less than an hour each time. He lectured, in Latin, to the students at the University, three days in the week, during the greater part of the year. He paid a minute attention to the cases of discipline which occurred in the church of Geneva, labouring earnestly for the repression of disorders and the correction of offenders. He carried on a voluminous correspondence with learned men in various parts of Europe; part of which has been published since his death: but the greater portion still remains in M.S. in the library of the University. He was perpetually engaged in controversy with the advocates of the church of Rome, or with some of his fellow-reformers; and thus was called on to issue a number of publications, several of which must have required a great deal of research. In addition to this, he was involved in the management of state-affairs: acting for a considerable time, as secretary to the Supreme Council of Geneva, and in that capacity drawing up all their documents and state-papers. Such was his influence with the magistrates of Geneva, that it was held by them to be a crime to dispute his judgment upon any article of the Christian faith; and many were banished from the city and its territory, who had been guilty of no other offence. Among these was the distinguished Castalio, the author of a Latin translation of the Bible which has been greatly celebrated: and which, though by no means representing the simplicity of the original, deserves at least the praise of elegant latinity. A more severe fate awaited James Gruet: he had not only fallen into opinions which Calvin judged heretical, but was

accused of having spoken disrespectfully of the great theologian himself, and of having attempted to undermine his influence with the king of France. For these offences, he was actually put to death; nor does it appear that Calvin ever made the slightest effort to procure a remission of the barbarous sentence. But the most noted instance of his severity is the punishment inflicted on MICHAEL SERVETUS, a learned, noble, and virtuous Spaniard; who, having escaped from the dungeons of the Inquisition in France, made his way in disguise, to Geneva, on his road to Italy; where he hoped to find protection. While he remained in that city, he was arrested, at the instigation of Calvin; brought to trial for heresy in denying the doctrine of the trinity; condemned by means of Calvin's testimony, who produced his private letters against him, written at a time when some degree of intimacy subsisted between them; and sentenced to be burnt to death. The unfortunate Servetus having refused to recant, fell a martyr to protestant bigotry: and years afterwards Calvin gloried in the deed. In truth the principle of toleration formed no part of his religious system; nor did he scruple to rid the church of its heterodox members, by the severest penalties of the law. Thus he continued, the absolute dictator of the church and the republic of Geneva, till his death in 1564 at the age of nearly 55 years. Few men have accomplished so much in the same space of time, or have exerted so extensive and permanent an influence over the minds of men. His death may be considered as the close of the First Period in the history of the Reformed Evangelical church of Geneva; which embraces its renunciation of catholicism, and its various subsequent charges, ending in the complete establishment of the discipline and doctrine recommended by Calvin.

II. After the death of this illustrious man, BEZA and the other doctors who succeeded him in the pastorship of the church and the superintendence of the University, contented themselves for a long time with explaining and defending the doctrines which he had inculcated: but at length some individuals were led to question the soundness of his decisions upon certain points; chiefly those relating to original sin and the divine decrees. A good deal of animosity was engendered by the consequent discussions: and the reformed in Switzerland

were alarmed lest results should ensue, highly injurious to the protestant cause. To avert these apprehended dangers, they adopted a most unfortunate plan; which, however, was also sanctioned by almost every church of that period: this was, to require of every minister that he should signify his concurrence in a *Form of Consent*, or Confession of Faith, before he should be permitted to exercise any pastoral functions; and that he should adhere to the doctrines of this formula, in his preaching and writings. The creed employed for this purpose at Geneva, was one which Calvin himself had drawn up about the year 1550, as the basis of an agreement between his own and some neighbouring churches, upon which he had prevailed to adopt his ecclesiastical system: from this circumstance, it was called the "*Consensus*" or Agreement "of the churches at Geneva and Zurich." The law of subscription to this document, secured for a time the tranquillity of the church; but there is reason to fear that, as in similar instances elsewhere, the agreement was only external; and that a considerable diversity of opinion existed under the outward show of unanimity. In progress of time a race of men, both divines and laymen, arose, who, to say the least, were never remarked for extraordinary zeal on behalf of the sterner doctrines of the *Consensus*; and who called in question the expediency of imposing any tests or terms of communion except those which were enjoined upon his followers by our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of these individuals, carrying forward to its necessary results the great principle of the reformation, the right of private judgment—that saving truth which alone redeems so many errors and so many crimes,—denounced all such impositions upon conscience, as tyrannical usurpations. These principles eventually obtained the ascendancy in Geneva; and in the year 1706 the Venerable Company of the Pastors, the Consistory of the church, and the Council of Two Hundred, all concurred in abolishing for the future, subscription to the *Consensus*, as a condition of church fellowship.

It is certain that Bishop Burnett spent a part of his time during his exile from England previous to the revolution of 1688, in Geneva: and his biographer gives him the credit of having been instrumental in prevailing on the church in that city to adopt the sacred scriptures as its sole creed. But, we believe, there are no docu-

ments existing which substantiate this assertion: and whether we consider Burnett as a minister of the kirk of Scotland, or as an English prelate, it must appear very improbable that he should have interfered for the promotion of a principle so liberal and comprehensive. It is not impossible, however, that, as a theologian of the moderate school, he may have wished the Genevese to discard their *Consensus*, and adopt some other creed, less highly calvinistic; and thus, perhaps, he may have aided in bringing that standard of orthodoxy into disrepute. It is well known, that Archbishop Wake, whose sentiments appear to have coincided very nearly with those of Burnett, in a Latin letter to the Venerable Company of Pastors at Geneva written in the year 1719, strongly recommends mutual forbearance among the reformed, on the subject of Universal Grace and other difficult questions: and counsels a return, *not to the Consensus*; but to the *Old Helvetic Confession*: which he intimates, like the articles of the church of England, observed a cautious neutrality on such points:—and we can see no improbability in supposing that Burnett may have previously exerted his influence for the same purpose. But the merit of adopting the scriptures as the creed of the church is due to others, not to him.

The immediate occasion of this important change was the appointment of M. VIAL DE BEAUMONT, a divine of Neufchatel, to a church in Geneva. On being required to subscribe the *Consensus*, as the confession of his faith, he refused to do so, except so far as it agreed with the holy scriptures; and the divines of the republic after long debates, decided, that this subscription was satisfactory. From the pastors an appeal was lodged before the magistrates; who decided in favour of the Articles. But the divines who had supported M. Vial brought the matter before the Council of Two Hundred, which is the legislative body of the state; and this assembly, after a powerful and eloquent speech in favour of religious liberty, delivered by the celebrated theologian JOHN ALPHONSO TURRETIN, (commonly called Turretin the younger,) decreed that in future the following oath should be held sufficient—“*I swear and declare in the presence of God, that I hold the Holy Scripture to be the only rule of my faith; and that it declares, in a very clear manner, whatever is necessary to salvation, and I promise that I will be conformable thereto, both in my doc-*

trine and practice." The person who administers this oath, then adds the following exhortation: "You are exhorted not to teach any thing contrary to the decisions of the Synod of Dort, the Forty Articles of Faith of the Reformed Churches of France, and our Catechism: they being esteemed agreeable to Scripture: and you are exhorted to this, for the sake of peace and union in the Church." About the same time, the Catechism of the church of Geneva underwent some modifications to bring it into a nearer conformity with the spirit of liberality which began to prevail in the acts and principles of the church. This may be regarded as the close of the Second Period in the history of the Reformed Evangelical church of Geneva; during which it was adorned by the characters and labours of several illustrious scholars and theologians: among whom it will be sufficient to allude to THEODORE BEZA, the two TURRETINS, father and son, PICTET, &c. &c.; by whom the celebrity of the Church and University of Geneva were ably maintained.

III. The Third Period in the narrative, comprises the history of the church of Geneva from the year 1706, in which subscription to the *Consensus* was abolished, till the present time. During this long period, religious liberty has produced its natural fruit, religious peace; and as a necessary consequence, the church, though presenting an aspect most gratifying to the moralist and the theologian, affords but few of those striking events which call for notice in a condensed historical essay. The pastors and members of the flock have now been free for nearly 130 years, to pursue their religious investigations, unfettered by any ecclesiastical authority; and to follow divine truth wherever she might appear to lead. There is reason to believe that many have exercised this invaluable privilege. It is undeniable that the divines of modern Geneva, have investigated and exhibited the truths taught in the sacred Scriptures with singular patience, calmness, and success. It is true that several among them have seen cause to reject some doctrines which were held by their predecessors in the days of Calvin; exactly as that great man and his contemporaries discarded some opinions that were entertained by their fore-runners in the Helvetic reformation: and many that were professed by their Roman Catholic ancestors: but this is no more than might have been

expected from the progress of knowledge during a space of more than two centuries and a half. But no-where has Christianity more consistent defenders or more able expositors, than those who now adorn the church of Geneva; CHENEVIÈRE, DUBY, MUNIER, CELLERIER, &c. &c. The reflecting reader will not be surprised to learn that there exists some diversity of sentiment both among the pastors and the people of Geneva; for this is the natural fruit of that free exercise of individual judgment, which is the honour and the blessing of their church. But still it may be doubted whether there is not as much real agreement of opinion, as can be found in any of those communities which employ Creeds and Confessions as their bonds of union. It is well understood that the great majority of the Genevese clergy and laity have been led to reject as unscriptural, the doctrine of the trinity, and those peculiar opinions respecting human salvation which are usually called Calvinistic. But their style of preaching is not dogmatical. The views of religion which they are most anxious to hold up to the minds of men are those cheering and elevating principles of our faith, which are in a great measure common to all sects. They inculcate and they exemplify the religion of universal charity.

Such was the happy condition of religion in Geneva, when the return of peace, in 1815, opened up the Continent once more to travellers from England; several of whom repaired to that city, carrying with them their intolerant fanaticism, their restless activity, and their *money*. Offended by the peaceful state in which they found the Genevese, and resolved at all hazards to attempt the re-establishment of the old orthodoxy, they found among the pastors and students of theology a few who were willing to second them in their plans; and discord and dissension were once more rekindled. The principal agent in this work of mischief was M. Cæsar Malan, a licentiate of the church; who, when called upon occasionally to officiate in the pulpits of Geneva, did not fail to attack, most bitterly, the sentiments which numbers of the regular pastors were known to entertain; and even to convey pointed allusions to those ministers, personally; and his example was followed by some others. To prevent the repetition of such scenes, the Consistory entered into a regulation on the 3d of May, 1817, "that without giving any judgment on the following questions,

or restraining in any degree the liberty of opinion, all students who desire to be set apart for the Gospel ministry, and all ministers who aspire to the exercise of pastoral functions, shall promise to abstain from discussing in whole discourses or parts of discourses, 1. The manner in which the Divine Nature is united to the person of Jesus Christ; 2. Original Sin; 3. The Operation of Grace and Effectual Calling; 4. Predestination; and not to oppose in their public discourses, the sentiments of any minister or pastor on these subjects." This act of Consistory is still in force. M. Malan, after much reasoning, at length was induced to promise compliance with the foregoing regulation; but soon afterwards deviated from it, in a very marked manner; and on being remonstrated with by the Consistory, solemnly renounced his engagement; whereupon his license to preach was withdrawn; and the pastors were forbidden to introduce him into their pulpits. We believe this was the occasion of the secession of M. Gautier, one of the most esteemed of the Genevese clergy. He, being of sentiments highly Calvinistic, continued to employ M. Malan as his substitute, notwithstanding the prohibition; and this conduct led to his removal from the pastorate in the national church; whether by his voluntary separation or by a special act of the Consistory we are at present unable to say; but the latter is the most probable. However this may be, neither he nor his associates, Messrs. Malan, Guers, &c. are prevented from preaching and lecturing as much as they please in fabrics of their own; which have been provided for them by the liberality of their English friends and supporters.

It is not to be expected that the *Bible Christian*, which has always advocated the freest range of thought and expression upon religious subjects, should approve of the Act of Consistory of the 3d May, 1817. It seems to us a manifest infringement upon the Christian liberty of both pastors and people; and a barrier to the progress of truth. Had we been in Geneva at the time, we should probably have been found among its most determined opponents; and if we possessed any influence with the Consistory at present, we should exert that influence to the utmost, in order to procure its repeal. But while we thus join with those who severely condemn this regulation, we yet feel it right to allude to some extenuating

circumstances, which are frequently overlooked in censures pronounced upon it. In forming a correct estimate of all the parts of this case, it ought to be borne in mind, (1.) that the regulation in question was not decreed by the Venerable Company of Pastors; to whom it is sometimes erroneously imputed; but by the *Consistory*, or Synod of the Church; a mixed assembly, comprising not only the pastors, but several of the magistrates of the city and other laymen holding various offices in the church and state. The pastors, in fact, compose only a minority of the body: which represents the entire community of Geneva; and in this instance appears to have expressed their feelings accurately. (2.) It is to be observed, that the Act itself refers only to *public preaching, of a controversial kind*. The ministers are at liberty to hold whatever opinions they please on disputed points; they are not prevented from maintaining them elsewhere than in the pulpit, by argument, either oral or written: the press is left open to them for the free expression of their views; nay, they are allowed to *state* their opinions as explicitly as they may think proper in their sermons and other addresses; they are simply prevented from *discussing them controversially*, in whole discourses, or parts of discourses. The grievance therefore is less than might at first sight appear. (3.) The prohibition is general and impartial. It extends to the Unitarians, as well as to the Trinitarians;—the Arminians, as well as the Calvinists. The attack and defence of the doctrines specified in the Act, are equally precluded. (4.) The law was voted by the majority of the adherents of both parties in the Consistory, as a pacific measure. *Had the decision of the question been left to the Calvinistic members alone, the result would have been the same*. It cannot therefore be fairly represented as a restraint forcibly imposed by their theological opponents, upon that party, in particular. (5.) More than one of the anti-calvinist or anti-methodist pastors, resisted the enactment of this measure; feeling it to be a restraint which ought to be imposed upon no christian ministry; and have since advised its repeal as a yoke peculiarly galling to themselves. (6.) If similar prohibitions are ever to be allowed, it seems that the church of Geneva is one of those in which they are most excusable; for the whole community is there considered as *one church*, of which every individual minister is a pastor. Hence no clergyman is allowed to

confine himself to any particular congregation or place of worship; but performs divine service, in rotation, in all the churches of the city. Under this system, the danger of collision, if controversial preaching were introduced, would be peculiarly great; and such collision between those who successively occupy the same pulpit, must always be offensive. To all these circumstances we must add that the Act of the Consistory, objectionable as it is, contrasts most favourably with the measures adopted by the Calvinists when they were in power; and which there is too much reason to apprehend they would again pursue were they to obtain the ascendancy. There can be little doubt that in such a case, the Act of 1706 would speedily be repealed, and subscription to the *Consensus* rigorously enforced: nor do the advocates of that party scruple to avow that such is their ultimate aim. If so, they of all men have the least reason to complain of any infringement upon religious liberty.

But notwithstanding the difference of opinion which is to be found upon this and some other subjects, the accounts which well-informed travellers give of the present state of Geneva, are highly favourable. Arts, sciences, and literature, are assiduously cultivated, and have diffused a refinement over society, which is nowhere surpassed. The people are orderly, harmonious, and kind. They are attentive to the ordinances of religion, without pharisaical sanctimoniousness; nor, as we have reason to believe, is there, in any city, a population of the same extent, more sober, more moral, and more virtuous than that of Geneva; none, in which acts of genuine goodness are more frequent, or crimes more rare.

It only remains to be mentioned, that in almost all the churches which, at first, adopted the model of Geneva, a succession of changes in theological sentiment has taken place, similar to that now described. The progress of opinion in the reformed churches of France, Holland and Germany has carried the present race of theologians far beyond the limits reached by their ancestors; and there are but few of their Academies or Consistories, in which the sentiments that, in this country, would be called Unitarian, are not predominant. Most of these churches are, it is true, still encumbered by the old laws, requiring subscription to

the ancient symbolical books : but there is not the slightest doubt that in very many instances, their sentiments and their creeds are widely at variance. For this assertion we have the warrant of the Continental Society which has been formed by the zealots of Great Britain, in order to carry on a perpetual crusade against the opinions which prevail in the foreign reformed churches. Large sums of money have been sent abroad for this purpose ; but the result has not hitherto answered the expectations of its founders. It is well known that the presbyterians of England, and the Synod of Munster and Presbytery of Antrim in Ireland, have long concurred with the church of Geneva in its comprehensive terms of communion. Symptoms of increasing liberality have begun to show themselves in the General Assembly of Presbyterians in America. The church of Scotland alone, and those dissenting sects which desire to be regarded as her offspring, and are willing to follow in her train, remain in the same state in which their ancestors were, five generations since. While all the rest of the world have been making progress, it is their pride and boast that they have stood still. Yet even in their communities, it is well known that many individuals, both ministers and others, think for themselves upon religious subjects ; and are far from agreeing in all points with their Confessions of Faith.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(*Continued from p. 442.*)

CHAPTER X.

V. 1. See Brief Notes. Matt. xix.

V. 5. For the hardness of your hearts he wrote this precept.

Jerome's comment on the parallel text in Matthew is, " God is not said to have permitted this, but Moses ; so that it is the counsel of man, not the command of God." See Deut. xxiv. 1.

The hardness of heart here mentioned, would otherwise, perhaps, have led to every species of cruelty and ill usage. The permission of divorce, therefore, was, with respect to the Jewish women, an act of humanity.

V. 11. Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

See Brief Notes, Matt. v.

The words, "saving for the cause of fornication," are here to be understood, See Matt. v. 32.

Doddridge thinks that the word in this passage translated *fornication* must be understood of *adultery*.

V. 12. And if a woman shall put away her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

Here also it would appear that the clause, "saving for the cause of fornication," is to be supplied.

"Put away her husband." This practice prevailed among the Jews, at least with persons of high rank, as appears from Josephus, having learned it from the Roman women.

The following is the Christian rule of marriage.

The union of one man and one woman is the law of God: "wherefore they are no more *twain*." "What therefore God hath joined let not man put asunder." See Gen. ii, 24. Matt. xix. 5, 6. Mark x, 8, 9. If they agree to part, they must remain unmarried, or be reconciled; 1 Cor. vii. 11. Second marriages are allowed, 1 Cor. vii. 39. Adultery is the only lawful cause of divorce, Matt. v. 32. The innocent party may marry again, because he is now released from the matrimonial bond, by the infidelity of his wife: but the offending party must not marry, and thus profit by her own wrong. If she marry another, she is guilty of adultery, because she is not released from her first marriage. Rom. vii. 3. Whosoever marries her is guilty of adultery, because she is still the wife of another man. Matt. v. 32. If a man puts away his wife, for any other cause, he is guilty of causing her to commit adultery, by exposing her to temptation, Matt. v. 32. These rules apply equally to both parties. This seems to be implied by this text, (ch. x. 12) and the reason of this case. Polygamy is directly contrary to the divine law given at the creation, and incompatible with these Gospel regulations.

V. 18. See Brief Notes, Matt. xix.

V. 25. Than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

That is, for a man who *trusteth* in riches, agreeably to ver. 24.

V. 27. With men it is impossible, but not with God, &c.

Humanly speaking, it is impossible, on account of our evil inclinations, and the numerous temptations of prosperity.

V. 30. But he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, &c.

Dr. Owen, Bp. Pearce, and others, consider these words as an interpolation. See Matt. xix. 29; Luke xviii. 30. If admitted to be genuine, it will be difficult to reconcile this declaration of temporal abundance and prosperity with the circumstances of the infant church.

V. 32. They were amazed, and as they followed, they were afraid.

The astonishment and fear of the disciples arose from the danger which their master formerly had experienced in Jerusalem. John vii. 45 ; viii. 40, 59.

V. 35. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, &c.

From Matt. xx. 20, it appears that their mother was with them. The application may have been made by the three jointly.

V. 42. Accounted [worthy] to rule.

V. 45. But to minister.

"To minister," in Scripture, signifies to serve.

V. 46. Bartimeus, the son of Timeus.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xx. 30. Mark, according to his custom, here explains this Syriac compound word.

CHAPTER XI.

V. 1. See Matt. xxi.

V. 13. And seeing a fig-tree afar off [at some distance] having leaves, he came, if haply, [perchance] he might find any thing thereon ; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves ; for the time of figs was not yet.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xxi.

"And observing a fig-tree at a distance, full of leaves, he went to look for fruit on it, for the fig-harvest was not yet. And being come he found nothing but leaves."—CAMPBELL.

The fig is of that tribe of vegetables wherein the fruit appears before the leaf. Though the fig-harvest was not yet come, yet they might expect to find some unripe fruit, which were considered a great delicacy, and very refreshing. For this reason, and as the fig-tree grew in the public road, they may have been already gathered, or the tree may have been barren.

"If the tree had not been barren, unripe fruit must have been found on it ; whereas, if it had been the season when figs are usually gathered and eaten, it seems probable that none would have remained on a fruitful tree in so public a situation."—NEWCOME.

V. 14. And Jesus answered and said unto it : No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever.

According to the Jewish manner of considering barren things, (Heb. vi. 8) Peter calls this a *cursing*, ver. 21. Our Lord's action was not the result of disappointment, because he hungered ; but it arose from a fixed attention to convey important truths in the most lively manner : as the tree was barren it was of no value, and as it stood in the public road, (Matt. xxi 12,) it was not private property.

V. 17. My house shall be called of all nations, the house of prayer.

My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.—NEWCOME, CAMPBELL, and marginal reading.

V. 23. See Brief Notes, Matt. xxi.

CHAPTER XII.

V. 1. And digged a place for the wine-vat.

See Brief notes, Matt. xxi. 33.

The wine-press of Matthew and the wine-vat here mentioned were parts of the same machine. A cavity was digged in the ground and lined with masonry to make it staunch; over this the press for mashing the grapes was erected, from which the juice ran into the hollow below. The tower was built for keeping the implements and vessels, and for the accommodation of the watchmen or occasionally for defence against robbers.

V. 9. What shall therefore the Lord of the vineyard do? he will come, &c.

According to Matt. (xxi. 41) these last words were spoken by the persons whom our Lord was addressing.

V. 10. The stone which the builders rejected, &c.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xxi. 42.

"The parable" mentioned in ver. 12, is our Lord's quotation from Psalms cxviii. 22.

V. 13. See Brief Notes, Matt. xxii.

V. 18. Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection.

Their master Sadoc taught that God was not to be served from mercenary principles. His followers interpreted this as a denial of a future state.

The story which they mention here, seems to have been a kind of common-place objection, as we meet with it in the old Jewish writers.

V. 27. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.

V. 29. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.

These words are a quotation from Deut. vi. 4. In the Hebrew they run thus; *Jehovah our God, Jehovah one*. In such sentences there is no substantive verb in Hebrew. *Campbell* thinks that they should be rendered as two sentences in Deut. thus,—*Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is one*. Our Lord's words agree with the Septuagint, which is the Greek version commonly used by the writers of the New Testament.

V. 34. Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

That is, thou art not far from embracing the Gospel.

V. 34. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

The people saw how completely those were foiled who tried to ensnare him by captious questions.

V. 38. And he said to them in his doctrine [in the course of his teaching].

V. 39. The uppermost rooms [Gr. the first seats] at feasts.

For a pretence make long prayers.

V. 40. Which devour widows' houses and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

"Which devour," &c. That is, who ruin widows and their families by their gluttony and extortion.

"For a pretence;" for the sake of outward appearance; and not with sincere piety.

"Damnation," literally *condemnation or judgment*; of which it hence appears there are different degrees. With us this word is confined to the *punishment of hell*. By the unwarrantable use of the terms *damned, damnation, damnable*, and others of like import, an asperity is given to the original which it has not.—*Campbell*.

Ver. 41. The people cast money into the treasury.

A chest was placed in one of the chambers of the temple to receive the gifts of the people. Compare 2 Kings xii. 9. John viii. 20.

Ver. 42. She threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

The word translated *farthing* was adopted from the Latin, and signified a Roman coin, the fourth part of an *As*, in value near our halfpenny, as our word *farthing* [fourthing] is the *fourth part of a penny*.

This is another instance of Mark's accommodating his style to the Romans, for whom he is thought to have written.



CORRESPONDENCE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND WITH GENEVA, ON THE OCCASION OF RECENT JUBILEE.

IN our last number was exhibited to our readers in the letter of the Scottish General Assembly to the Church of Geneva, a specimen of rudeness worthy of the barbarism of the Vandals, and of dogmatical arrogance not inferior to the assumption of Papal authority in the plenitude of its power. The heavy charges insinuated by the Scottish General Assembly, with their sentence of excommunication pronounced against the Church of Geneva, were widely published wherever their influence extended, for a considerable time before the Venerable Company was furnished with an authentic copy of their indictment.—This was not fair dealing. It was inconsistent with the spirit, the letter, and the practice of British law, which requires that the accused should be apprised of the charges previous to the trial, and be heard in their defence before condemnation.—It was yet more inconsistent with the plainest rules of

equity prescribed in the Gospel. Our Saviour lays it down as a positive direction to all his followers that, in case of any charge to be brought, the matter should be privately communicated to the party supposed to be in fault; for, that by a mild remonstrance and a patient hearing, the matter might be explained, and Christian brethren be reconciled. If this should fail through the perverseness of the accused, the succeeding steps of the process enjoined by our Lord are, to sift and investigate the truth of the charge by the aid of credible witnesses, so that every circumstance of the matter may be known and established. And it is only upon the most full and unquestionable proof of delinquency, impenitence, and obstinate irreclaimableness, that fraternal intercourse is to be suspended towards the culprit, and that "he is to be considered as a heathen man and a publican."

The Church of Scotland adopts a course the very reverse of all these. She first listens to evil reports concerning her brethren, and gives these reports a ready credence, admitting them to be true without any investigation. Without any private communication with the accused,—which Christ commanded to be the first step in case of misunderstandings among his disciples;—without any appeal to the calm judgment of impartial witnesses who might investigate the truth of the charges,—which Christ directed to be the second step of the process;—without any reference to the rules of the Universal Church as found in the unerring directions of Himself and His apostles,—which Christ has appointed to be the third step, and the ultimate arbiter in such cases,—in short, without any trial, investigation, appeal to witnesses, or private communication, she "taketh up reproaches against her neighbour," from those "that backbite with their tongue;" and by refusing the hand of religious fraternity she pronounces against that neighbour the final sentence of excommunication from religious fellowship or brotherly intercourse.

The promptitude with which the Scottish General Assembly published these unkind charges against their brethren of Geneva, with this sentence of condemnation affixed, is singularly contrasted with the backwardness they have evinced in giving publicity to the strong and decided refutation of the charges, transmitted to them

without one moment's delay, by the Venerable Company of Pastors. Does not this appear to be a gross and crying iniquity? Grave charges had been insinuated by them, against a Christian church, and a sentence of condemnation pronounced as if those charges had been substantiated; sure then it was the dictate of justice, and candour, and honesty, (if such virtues be any where enjoined by the Westminster Confession) to suffer the accused to be publicly heard in their own justification, and to let their defence be known, at least as widely as the charges had been proclaimed. Alas for the Church of Scotland! Is there no longer to be found in her courts, a Robertson or a Blair?

The conduct of the General Assembly throughout the whole of this affair presents an evil and malignant aspect in every point in which it can be viewed. The cordial invitation of the frank and unsuspecting Genevese afforded an ample opportunity to the members of the Scottish church to satisfy themselves by personal observation, as to the correctness or erroneousness of the evil reports they had taken up. Why, then, did they not depute trusty delegates to Geneva, to declare with candour and openness the grievous rumours they had heard, to investigate the truth of these rumours, to demand a clear, public, and explicit answer to the charges alleged, and to bring back to the General Assembly such a report as might either have justified them in a withdrawal from religious communion, or have led them to renounce their jealousies, suspicions, and groundless surmises, against a church endeared to them by so many ancient, close and tender associations?

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

IN our next number, we hope to lay before our readers "*Specimens of the Correspondence between the Reformed Churches of Europe and that of Geneva, on the occasion of the Jubilee.*"

The letter of Rev. C. J. M'ALISTER, shall appear next month: as also, Lines on "*Thy kingdom, Come.*"

The Communications of W. J. and of B. C. D. shall receive early attention.

The letter of "*A Unitarian Christian*" recommending the delivery of sermons without notes, has been received: but it is believed that the object of the writer will be attained by our thus calling the attention of ministers and congregations to the subject.

Several articles of review, including notices of Mr. Mitchell's Sermons and the 2d vol. of Dr. Channing's Works are unavoidably postponed.

Correspondents are again earnestly requested to forward their communications *early in the month.*

THE
Bible Christian.

No. XII.

JANUARY, 1836.

VOL. VI.

TO THE REV. J. D. HULL,

Assistant Curate of Bangor, Diocese of Down.

REV. SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a Pastoral Address that has just appeared from you to your Parishioners. Although in that address there are several principles and precepts laid down, in which I cordially agree with you, yet I think it teaches error; and as a minister, residing in your neighbourhood, I desire, as far as I can, to correct it. In doing so, I trust I shall not allow any expression to drop from my pen, personally offensive to you. I write not against men, but opinions. My religion teaches me the precept which you would instil, "*to hold the truth in love*;" and not to hate my neighbour, though I may dislike his creed. Oh! that men would practically understand this Charity, the chief of the Christian graces. Then would they cease to make a difference of creed an excuse for reviling,—persecuting,—murdering one another; and the fiery partizans that stalk over the nation, and act on *religious* prejudices to gain *political* ends, would be robbed of the sting by which they are wounding the vitals of their country!

I have said that there are several principles and precepts in your Address that meet my approval. It is needless to dwell on them; but permit me to notice one, which you avow in words, and yet violate in spirit. I admire the counsel which you give your flock, "*to study the Scriptures privately with diligence*;" and most heartily do I concur with you in thinking, "that it is the neglecting of these, for human compositions, that has uniformly been the cause of heresy and error." But I do not agree with you in thinking that the Jews and Romanists alone have been led into this mistake. I think that the Church, of which you are a member, has followed in the same path. The HUMAN COMPOSITIONS, that constitute the standards of your own Church, have been the fruitful source of error—have handed down heresy for "sound doctrine" from sire to son; and have perpetuated the errors of Romanism in a sect that has re-

nounced the name. For example, in the Order for the Visitation of the sick, "the sick person is moved to make a special confession of his sins"—after which confession, the minister declares, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and, by *his authority* committed to me, *I absolve thee from all thy sins*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Have we not here taught in plain words the doctrines of *special* (or auricular) *confession* and *absolution*? I will not stop to notice your Book of Common Prayer—translated as it is from the Mass-book—your kneeling at the Lord's Supper—the acknowledgment of a temporal king (or queen, as the case may be) as head of a spiritual church, &c. &c.; but I shall content myself with asking you, how you can maintain the great Protestant principle of *the Bible and the Bible only*, while you cling to "human compositions," and subscribe to human creeds? It must be plain to you, that if the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies of "your own apostolical church," (as you call it,) contain only what is in the Bible, they are useless, and if they contain more, they must be dangerous.

You speak of incrustations that had defaced the beauty of our holy religion in former times, which Luther and the other reformers removed. I admit that these great men—venerated be their memory!—did much to restore our faith to its primitive simplicity; but they would have been more than men, had they been able at once to see all their errors. They had opened their eyes after a long night of darkness; and as the blind man, cured by the Saviour, at first saw men but "as trees walking," so were they unable, in an instant, to see the length and the breadth of Christian truth. There are still incrustations about the truth, that obscure its lustre, and they too must be removed by a more diligent study of the Scriptures—a more complete and unreserved rejection of "HUMAN COMPOSITIONS." May the all-wise Jehovah hasten the time, when there shall be but one Master, even Christ, and one Creed even the Bible.

But I chiefly desire to consider the doctrine of the Trinity which you mildly insinuate, but your church positively declares, is necessary to salvation. In reading that part of your Address, in which you largely insist

on this doctrine, I could not help asking myself, did the Apostles in their Sermons and Epistles, hold up the Trinity as you have done? In the Acts we have a summary of several discourses of these holy men of God recorded—and as they were preaching to many who before knew nothing about the gospel at all, we might surely expect that they would teach very plainly a doctrine which, if we do not believe, we must, “without doubt, perish everlastingly.” But strange to say, you may read over all these Sermons, and you will not read one syllable about the Trinity.

You first assert that there is One God, and then add that “in this unity of the Godhead—in this oneness of Essence, there is a Trinity of Persons.” I receive the former assertion as a great truth—the foundation of all truth—revealed by the Eternal Himself—written, as with a sunbeam, on every page of Scripture; but the latter I reject as a heresy, gathered from the writings of Plato, and introduced into the church by the “vain philosophy” of early times.

You endeavour to prove a Trinity from texts of Scripture, which declare plainly enough that there is a God, a Christ, and a Holy Spirit; but which say nothing about these Three being One Essence. Thus you cite John, xiv. 26. “But the comforter, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.” This text does not say, that the comforter sent is the God who sent him; neither does it say that the Spirit which came in Christ’s name is Christ himself. Again, you quote Matt. xxviii. 19. where we read, “Baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” It was very natural to suppose, that the Apostles would instruct mankind in the one God the Father, in the one Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost, the comforter; but it was not natural to suppose, and neither do we find, that these Three are one and the same Being. The truth is, that from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, there is no mention of a Trinity; it was not in use till long, long after the death of Christ and his Apostles; and was at length introduced by men whose pride would not suffer them to stoop to the simple doctrine of “Christ crucified.” In addition to the arguments for a Trinity that you advance from Scripture, I am astonished to find that you seek proofs for it from the mythological fooleries of

Heathenism. Surely, surely, Heathenism is no source from which to prove Christian doctrine; although, I grieve to say, it is the source from which some doctrines and ceremonies, falsely called Christian, have been derived.

In endeavouring to show the scripturality of the word "Person," as used in your church, you refer to Heb. 1, 3, where Christ is called "the express image of his Father's *person*." I presume that you know the original Greek from which this is translated; and, if you do, you must know that Person in this passage means Nature or Essence, and therefore actually disproves your point, while to the unlearned, it *seems* to establish it. But if by Person you mean Being, (and it is hard to conceive what else you mean by it,) I cheerfully admit that God is a Being, and that Christ is a Being, but I deny that these *two* Beings are *one* Being. Indeed you will find that on this subject, the difference between Christians is rather a difference of words than ideas. Few, I think, really believe that the Father and the Son, the Sender and the Sent, the Giver and the Gift, the Anointer and the Anointed, are the same Being. Few, I trust, believe that God, the unchangeable God, died on the cross, although a doctrine so awfully false, is, by a dishonest trick, taught as if from the scriptures, in one of the Epistles in your Book of Common Prayer.*

The Trinity, as propounded by your Church, cannot be received by any one without an entire prostration of his understanding—for it requires us to believe that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Son, but yet it teaches that the Son is begotten by the Holy Ghost; and while one of its creeds maintains that Christ is of one substance with the Father—another of its creeds asserts that there is *one* person of the Father, and *another* of the Son. You allege that "it is a great mystery, which you do not pretend to explicate." If any one desire to see an attempt to explicate it, I beseech him to read that monster of "human composition," the Athanasian Creed. By pronouncing it a mystery,† you shield yourself from all argument, and fix it on as stable

* See the Epistle for the second Sunday after Trinity.

† We read of mysteries in the New Testament, but they were mysteries which when revealed were known and understood by all. See Mat. xiii. 11; 1 Cor. xiii. 2, &c. &c.

a foundation as Transubstantiation itself; the one is as easily proved from scripture as the other, and both seem to be very nearly related to that woman represented in the Apocalypse, on whose forehead there is a name written—MYSTERY.

In the course of your Address you speak of the difficulty which young inquirers after the truth encounter. Believe me that it is not the young alone that are perplexed and puzzled with the doctrine of Three Persons in One Nature, and Two Natures in One Person. It is a difficulty that has often disturbed the mind of mature Christians. Let me lay before you the thoughts of Dr. Isaac Watts on the subject. He was a good and pious man, and his memory is justly revered. He held, during the greater part of his life, the opinions that he had learned from his Catechism; and you have probably taught his Divine Songs, in which these opinions are embodied, to the children of your Parish. In the latter part of his life, by a more diligent study of the Scriptures, he was led to discover his errors. Mark, I entreat you, his feeling and fervent reflections on the Trinity, as taken from his "Solemn Address to the Deity."

"Hadst thou informed me, gracious Father! in any place of thy word, that this divine doctrine is not to be understood by men, and yet they were required to believe it, I would have subdued all my curiosity to faith. But I cannot find thou hast any where forbid me to understand it, or make these inquiries. I have therefore been long searching into this divine doctrine, that I may pay thee due honour with understanding. Surely, I ought to know the God whom I worship, whether He be one pure and simple Being, or whether thou art a threefold Deity, consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

"Thou hast called the poor and ignorant, the mean and foolish things of this world, to this knowledge of thyself and thy Son. But how can such weak creatures ever take in so strange, so difficult, and so abstruse a doctrine as this, in the explication and defence whereof, multitudes of men, even men of learning and piety, have lost themselves in infinite subtleties of disputes and endless mazes of darkness? And can this strange and perplexing notion of three real persons going to make up one true God, be so necessary and so important a part of that Christian doctrine, which, in the Old Tes-

tament and the New, is represented as so plain and easy, even to the meanest understandings."

May the spirit of pious and scriptural inquiry that moved the mind of this good Christian, animate you and your brethren; and may the day soon come, when the heresy of a Triune God shall die away, and all who *search the scriptures* shall agree in believing, from the prophecies of the Old Testament—from the teachings of the Saviour himself—from the Sermons and Epistles of his Apostles—and from the general tenor of scripture, that Christ is not God, but "His Beloved Son in whom He is well pleased."

I have felt it my duty to examine your Address, disseminated, as it is, in the adjoining Parish, and thus brought nigh to our doors. What I have written, I have written seriously. May it meet your serious attention; and may it tend to the advancement of that truth which is able to make us free—free from error, and free from sin. Let us strive to imitate Myles Coverdale, that good and honest man, of whom you speak, who has been lately extolled by you and your brethren as a Saint, but was persecuted by your ancestors as a Demon, of whose bishopric you tell us, but of whose sufferings you say not a word: let us imitate him, who BOUGHT THE TRUTH by patient study of the Scriptures, and who SOLD IT NOT, though tempted by the smiles of Royalty, and assailed by the persecuting spirit of your "apostolical" Church, which at last "brought down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

Allow me to subscribe myself,

Rev. Sir,

Your friend and fellow-Christian,

CHARLES J. M'ALESTER.

Holywood, November 27, 1835.

BRIEF NOTES ON SELECT TEXTS.

(Continued from p. 526.)

CHAPTER XIII.

V. 1. What manner of stones!

See Brief Notes. Matt. xxiv.

"Stones." Josephus says that some of those used by Herod were 25 cubits long, 8 high, and 12 broad.—Ant. xv. xi. 3.

A cubit is somewhat more than a foot and a half.

V. 6. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ.

Several of these pretenders are recorded in history.

V. 7. Wars.

These arose a few years after the death of Christ and continued to the destruction of Jerusalem.

V. 9. For they shall deliver you up to councils, &c.

"Councils," The Sanhedrim.

"Rulers," Roman governors.

"Kings," Antipas and Agrippa.

"For a testimony against" [Gr. to] "all nations."

V. 10. And the gospel must first be preached among all nations.

That is, throughout the Roman empire.

V. 12. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, &c.

The Roman historians ascribe the severity of the persecution of the Christians to informers among themselves, and describe them as "hated of all men." In this, however, the Romans confounded the Christians with the Jews.

V. 17, 18. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray that your flight be not in the winter.

All these circumstances would retard their flight.

V. 22. For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew [fictitious] signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect, [the disciples or christian converts.]

V. 24. See Brief Notes. Matt. xxiv. 29.

V. 27. And he shall send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds.

He shall send forth his messengers, and they shall assemble his elect from the uttermost parts of the earth.—*Doddridge*.

V. 29. It is nigh.

Or, "he is nigh," meaning the Son of man.

V. 32. But of that day and that hour [or season] knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

"Neither the Son." Some critics are of opinion that this form of expression means only, that it was not proper for Christ to make it known; but that the Father will reveal it at the proper time.—See *Townsend's Harmonies*.—Observe the gradation.

MARK—CHAP. XIV.

V. 1. After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread, &c.

Wednesday in Passion week.

"I apprehend that the preceding discourses were delivered on the Tuesday of the week in which he suffered; and he probably uttered the following words that evening, which was just two days before the paschal lamb was eaten."—*Doddridge*.

They were to eat unleavened bread to denote the haste with which they departed from Egypt, which did not allow of time for preparing their bread in the usual way.

V. 3. And being at Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard.

See Brief Notes. Matt. xxvi; see also John xii. 5.

"Ointment of Spikenard," of liquid nard.

"Poured it on his head," as he reclined at meat on a couch.

"She brake the box." The word rendered *break*, signifies also to *shake*, in order to mix a fluid before it is poured out, to prevent any parts from settling at the bottom, and also to "*break*" open.

V. 12. the first day of unleavened bread [Thursday.]

V. 14. Where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? &c.

As the people came to Jerusalem from all parts three times a year, to celebrate the festivals appointed by the law, the houses were open to strangers, and the inhabitants furnished them with beds.

V. 18. And they sat and did eat [or were eating.]

The following ceremonies took place at the Paschal supper:—The master of the family began the feast with a cup of wine, which having solemnly blessed, that is, having adored the name of God over it, he divided among the guests, (Luke xxii. 17.) and afterwards washed his hands:—Then the supper began with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, which when the master and the rest of the company had tasted, some young person asked the reason of what was peculiar in that feast, (according to Exod. xii. 26.) which introduced the haggadah, that is, the showing forth or declaration of it; (in allusion to which we read of *showing forth the Lord's death*, 1 Cor. xi. 26.)—Then the master rose up and took another cup, and washed his hands again, before the lamb was tasted; and in this interval Christ may have washed the feet of his disciples. Then after eating the passover, after having delivered to each a piece of bread, followed another cup, which was the sacramental cup at this [at the Lord's] supper:—Then, after some pious and friendly discourse, the whole family, after having drunk at least a fourth cup, sang some psalms of praise: and so the solemnity ended.—*Ainsworth apud Doddridge*.

To the first cup Paul seems to allude, 1 Cor. x. 16. "The cup of blessing which we bless," distinguishing it from the cups which the Jews blessed at the Passover.

In the celebration of the passover the Jews had two suppers; the first sacramental, at which the paschal lamb was eaten; the second ordinary, at which they partook of other meat. Christ probably stood during the first, according to the Law of Moses, and then reclined or sat during the second, and in this posture administered the Eucharist or Lord's Supper.—*Pool's Synopsis*.

V. 19. The night before the crucifixion.

V. 20. That dippeth with me in the dish.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xxvi. 23.

V. 22. Take, eat.

"Eat," is omitted by Griesbach.

V. 24. This is my blood of the new Testament, which is shed for many.

The word here rendered *Testament* is also rendered *Covenant*; it is used to signify the Christian dispensation. The Gospel is called a Testament, or Will, because by it certain blessings are bestowed or bequeathed; it is called a covenant, because certain conditions are required of those who would enjoy or inherit these blessings.

"When the sacramental cup, here and in 1 Cor. xi. 25, is called *the new covenant*, it must signify *the seal* of it. The title of our Bible is improperly and obscurely rendered (Old and New Testament) by a piece of complaisance to the old Latin versions. The old covenant had no reference to the death of any testator, which is the idea chiefly insisted on by those who would retain our common version of the word."—*Doddridge*.

V. 25. I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

I will not taste any more wine till the time of the erection of the Messiah's kingdom; referring to his *resurrection*, at which his kingdom properly was erected.—*Harwood*.

V. 32. Gethsemane.

This garden lay in one of the vallies between the little hills of Mount Olivet.

V. 40. Wist [knew.]

V. 41. It is enough.

All is over; *Campbell*. It is done; *Newcome*.

V. 43. Staves [plural of staff.]

V. 44. And he that betrayed him had given them a token.

"A token." In the Greek "the signal agreed on between them," it being dark, and his followers being strangers to the person of Jesus.

V. 51. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him.

"A young man;" a disciple, or one of the neighbourhood who came to discover the cause of the disturbance.

"A linen cloth." This may have been the vesture in which he slept, or a thin upper garment.—*Newcome*.

Pococke observes that it is the custom among the Arabs to wear a large blanket, and in summer a sheet. Young people, especially of the poorer sort, had nothing on but this blanket or sheet.

"The young men;" the soldiers.—*Campbell*.

V. 53. Morning of Good Friday.

V. 56. Their witness [testimony] agreed not together.

"Agreed not together." In the Greek, were not equal or alike. Were not sufficient.—*Newcome and Campbell*.

V. 58. Made without hands.

Not liable to decay. See 2 Cor. vi.; Col. ii. 11; Heb. ix. 11.

V. 64. Ye have heard the blasphemy.

"Blasphemy" properly denotes in Scripture, *calumny, detraction, reproachful, or abusive language*. That the Greek word rendered *blasphemy* and its conjugates are in the New Testament very often applied to reproaches, not aimed against God, is evident from a variety of passages; but in many of them our English translators, sensible that they do not refer to God, have not used the word *blaspheme* or *blasphemy*, but *rail, revile, speak evil, &c.* In Jude, v. 9, a reproach brought even against the devil, which is rendered a *railing accusation*, is in the Greek a *blasphemous accusation*. That this word comprehends all verbal abuse, against whomsoever uttered is universally admitted by the learned.—*Campbell*.

V. 64. They all condemned him to be guilty of death.

Agreeably to Lev. xxiv. 16.

V. 65. To cover his face.

By this they indicated that they considered him as a malefactor, and convicted of guilt. See Esther, vii. 8.

V. 66. And as Peter was beneath in the palace.

It would seem that in front of the palace there was a *porch* or *portico*, into which Peter *went* when challenged by one of the maids. This led into a hall for the reception of strangers and persons in waiting, where Peter was *warming himself* at the fire, when he denied his master. This hall was *beneath*, or lower than the court or judgment hall where Jesus was on his trial.

MARK—CHAP. XV.

V. 2. Thou sayest it.

The Hebrew writers speak of this as the most solemn mode of asserting an affirmative. See *Townsend's Harmony*, p. 451.

V. 5. But he answered nothing.

He made no further answer than in verse 2.

V. 6. Now at that feast he released, &c.

He according to custom released unto them one prisoner : perhaps as a memorial of their deliverance from their captivity in Egypt.

V. 16. Pretorium.

A Latin word signifying the hall or palace of a governor or *Prætor*. See Brief Notes. Matt. xxvii.

V. 21. And they compel one Simon to bear his cross.

Jesus was forced to bear his cross through the city, John xix. 17 ; but when he was got without the gates, and fainting, perhaps, under the burden, they then compelled Simon to carry it to the place of crucifixion.

This "Rufus" was perhaps the same mentioned in Rom xvi. 15 ; his name being Roman.

V. 23. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh.

Matthew says, "Vinegar to drink mingled with gall;" but the two Evangelists speak of the same ingredients. For though Mark terms that *wine* which Matthew calls *vinegar* he may really have meant *vinegar*, which was a common drink among the ancients (Numb. vi. 3;) and made of wine.

As to the word translated *gall*, it may have signified any bitter drug whatever.

It was customary to give stupefying draughts to prisoners at their execution. Prov. xxxi. 6. "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish : " *i. e.* to him that is condemned to death.

V. 25. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

Christ spent the night in the hall of the High Priest. In the morning he was delivered to Pilate. From that time the examinations continued till the sixth hour, according to John (xix. 14;) not the sixth according to the Jews, but according to the Romans, which was the first by the Jewish reckoning. From that time till the third hour of the Jews or ninth of the Romans, preparation was made for the crucifixion, which took place at that hour. At the sixth, or according to the Romans the twelfth, the darkness began and lasted till the ninth.—*Pool's Synopsis*.

Campbell prefers the solution of this given by those who consider the day as divided into four parts, answering to the four watches of the night. These coincided with the hours of 3, 6, 9, and 12, or in our way of reckoning 9, 12, 3, and 6 ; which suited also the solemn times of sacrifice and prayer in the temple ; in cases wherein they did not think it of consequence to ascertain the time with great accuracy, they did not regard the intermediate hours, but only those more noted divisions which happened to come nearest the event spoken of. Mark says, "and it was the third hour ;" from which we have reason to conclude that the third hour was past ; John says, "and it was about the sixth hour;" from which I think it probable that the sixth hour was to come.

"They crucified him," Greek, *nailed him to the cross* ; which was done while the cross lay on the ground.

V. 26. And the superscription of his accusation was written over [Gr. inscribed] &c.

V. 27. And with him they crucify two thieves, [Gr. robbers.]

V. 32. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

This is what is called an enallage of numbers, the plural being put for the singular. Luke xxiii. 39, says, "And one of the malefactors," &c.—*Doddridge*.

V. 23. There was darkness over the whole land.

See Brief Notes, Matt. xxvii. 45.

V. 34. Which is being interpreted.

Here again Mark interprets these Hebrew or Chaldaic words, taken from Psalms xxii. 1, for the information of his Italian readers.

V. 36. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, &c.

A mixture of vinegar and water was the common drink of the Roman soldiers, and might be provided for their use in the heat of the day.

V. 40. James the less.

James the younger; inferior in age to James the son of Alphaeus.

V. 42. And now when the even was come (because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,) [or Saturday,] &c.

"Even;" the former evening which began at our three after noon; or, between 3 and 6 o'clock on Friday, at which latter hour the sabbath commenced.

V. 43. Joseph, of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, &c.

He seems to have been a member of the great Council or Sanhedrim. See Luke xxiii. 50.

MARK—CHAP. XVI.

V. 1. And when the sabbath was past.

After 6 o'clock on Saturday evening.

V. 2. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre, &c.

This was Easter Sunday.

Luke and John speak of the beginning of their journey; Mark, of the end.

The distance of the sepulchre from Jerusalem was not one mile.

V. 4. For it was very great.

This should be read immediately after verse 3.

V. 8. See Brief Notes. Matt. xxviii.

V. 9. Mary Magdalene, out of whom he cast seven devils.

“Seven devils;” *many* demons. See Lev. xxvi. 18. 21; Deut. xxviii. 7. 25; Job v. 19. The number *seven* is often used indefinitely for *many*.

V. 12. After that, he appeared in another form unto two of them.

He appeared unto them in the form of a stranger. See Luke xxiv. 15. 16.

V. 14. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven [apostles.]

As Paul (1 Cor. xv. 5.) calls the company of the apostles *the twelve*, though Judas was dead: so Mark here calls them *the eleven*, though Thomas was absent. (See John xx. 24.)

V. 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

“Shall he saved;” shall be in a state of salvation.

“Shall be damned,” [condemned;] “shall be in a state of condemnation.” See John iii. 19.—*Newcome*.

V. 20. Confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

That is, with the signs and miracles following and confirming their preaching.

“Amen.” The proper signification of this word is *true*, as spoken of things; *observant of truth*, as spoken of persons; sometimes *truth* in the abstract. In the Old Testament it is sometimes used adverbially, denoting a concurrence in any wish or prayer, and is rendered by the seventy *so be it*. In the New Testament it is frequently used in affirmation for verily and truly.



ON THE STANDARD OF MORALITY AND RELIGION.

(To the Editor of the Bible Christian.)

SIR.—In consequence of absence from home, it was only a few days ago that your April number of the Bible Christian came into my hands; in which I read an article entitled “*Hints for Preachers*,” which truly astonished and afflicted me. The motive of the writer may be good, but his opinions appear to me calculated to sap the foundation of moral principles, to loosen the bonds of Christian fellowship, and to extract from religion its sweetest, holiest drop of social enjoyment.

At page 114 we meet the following paragraph; “Another class of sacred orators may be censured for fixing the standard of moral principle and devotional feeling too high;” and thus on the end of the next page.

And so because the preacher may be met every day bustling through a crowd, solicitous about his worldly affairs, &c. he must, when in the pulpit, as the minister of God's word, lower its standard, in order not to scandalize his daily practice! Pray, how far should he lower it? for it seems to be implied that preachers should measure excellence by their own pigmy qualifications. Massillon, and Fenelon are allowed to elevate before their hearers a higher standard for imitation, than would become modern Unitarians. But what are we told in scripture? "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect!" And who is there set forth as our model for imitation? Not a frail mortal, but the son of God himself, "who left us an example that we should follow his steps." Shall a minister then presume to set aside these holy commands and be withheld by the consciousness of his own frailty from urging forward all disciples of Christ to the only goal which they should ever keep in view? In worldly professions this is not the case. The teacher of painting sets before his pupils the finest productions of genius, and encourages them to draw inspiration from models which he can himself rarely hope to equal. He never thinks of setting before the young artists, such patterns only as correspond with his own imperfect style of execution; or turning their attention away from examples of transcendent excellence, lest a contrast should be observed, between them and his own feeble productions. And yet it is hinted to a Christian teacher that "he should not soar too high for his auditory, but suit his preaching to their convictions and practice!" Alas, alas, this is too often done by worldly-minded preachers of the gospel. They require no encouragement to modulate their strains to earthly measure. But the pure-minded Christian pastor should not be withheld by such considerations; avoiding vain declamation, common-place extasies, and puerile repetitions, he should look to the bible as his guide, and to Christ as the spotless example which he should ever hold up to view. If his conduct be exemplary out of the pulpit, it may serve to illustrate and enforce his arguments; but if he be immoral or even frivolous, he is to be condemned, not for presenting his hearers with too high a standard for imitation, but falling so shamefully short of it himself:—not for the subject matter of his doctrine, but for the glaring discrepancy between his

preaching and his practice. No minister who "is to be seen in the ball-room" is judicious in adopting in his sermons the fashionable saintish cant of denouncing dancing as a heinous sin; but let him earnestly exhort to purity of life as taught in the gospel; and not lower his high standard to the scale of his own, or his auditors' conduct.

The next point which the writer discusses is "Family worship." After a quaint eulogium on this "edifying exercise," he goes on to furnish excuses for its non-performance; some of which will be found to answer every description of family, except the inhabitants of some "rural district," where time, it may be presumed, passing heavily, the pastor may expect his flock to fill up the lagging hours with domestic devotion; but in populous cities there is not a moment to be spared for such old fashioned pious rites. Religion is there to be made subservient to worldly affairs, and we are to be told by our pastors, that "the innocent recreations of the young can hardly be expected to give way to family prayer!" As well might it be said that they should not give way to the sanctity of the sabbath, or to any other sacred duty which habitually or incidentally occurs. It is vain to throw out the insidious observation, that "family worship is not imposed by any express command in the gospel." How many Christian graces are merely infused by the spirit of the gospel, not taught by letter. Where have we in the New Testament the clear, express command to build temples for public worship and to resort to them at a certain hour on Sunday? But we read, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together:" and we judge it expedient to fix a place and time for the performance of this now sacred duty. In like manner Christians and Presbyterians especially, have adopted and sanctified family worship. Its kindly influence is allowed by all; it harmonises perfectly with the spirit of the gospel, and has been practised by the pious and good in every age. It began in the time of the apostles, in those *churches* or domestic reunions to which Paul sends such friendly greetings. "Salute ye the brethren which are in Laodicea; and Nymphas, and the *church* which is in *his house*." Col. iv. 15. "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the *church* that is in *their house*." 1 Cor. xvi. 19. Such assemblies consisted, no doubt, of more than the family, and served as nurseries to Christianity, before she ventured to walk alone in the world. But because the domestic altar cannot

now be surrounded by such "burning lights," is it to be entirely demolished? Because Christianity has gone forth in her strength and beauty, and been lodged in more splendid mansions, is she no longer a fit guest for the family circle?

Nature, by developing the affections before she expands the intellect, teaches us that pious feelings should be inspired before religious truth can be thoroughly investigated. Who that has read JOTHAM ANDERSON, where he speaks of his childhood and his mother, or SILVIO PELLICO's thoughts in prison on the same subject, or COWPER's well known lines, does not feel that *home* is the true birth-place of piety in the soul? Indeed this principle is often recognised where family devotion is disregarded; and mothers will teach younger children to repeat prayers which drop into disuse as they advance and become members of the grown up circle. But why is devotion to be thus laid aside at the moment that intellect should set its stamp upon the affections? Why are the early buddings of piety allowed to be choaked up by the tares of this world—to lie hidden for years, till the cold breath of sorrow casts a blight on the earthly weed, and the long neglected heavenly plant is revived and watered into maturity by the tears of affliction? Surely family worship, by its fostering care, might have directed their growth differently. We should not then have to be told that "parents and children cannot walk to the house of the Lord in company!" Except in the rare case of parents being of different persuasions, there should be but one religious soul in a family and its homage should be daily offered at the throne of mercy. Heaven is often called our "long home." Oh! that homes on this earth were made a preparation for that eternal abode, so that the feelings connected with *home* and *heaven* would become blended into one sentiment!

Our Presbyterian ancestors were zealous performers of family worship. While we reject their Calvinistic errors, we should not despise their godly practice, which has contributed not a little to bind them in the strict bond of Christian fellowship. When a Calvinist is tempted to repudiate the doctrines of his church, the struggle is dreadful. Dogmas have to be uprooted which were early planted in his heart, and which grew up and flourished amid all the kindly feelings of his nature. Home and happiness, the family bible, and the five points are so amalgamated, that to separate them becomes

impossible. With heartfelt sorrow I must confess this is rarely the case when Unitarians are urged to renounce the worship of their fathers. They have been brought up more free and independent. Religion with them was merely an intellectual weekly exercise. A warm heart yearns for something more, and in carrying forward all its love and affection to heaven, feels that it has broken none of its earthly religious sympathies.

But to return to the point at issue. The writer grants that family worship is an "interesting and edifying exercise," but he wishes to withdraw from it the sanction of a gospel command, and allows the sufficiency of some most frivolous excuses for its non-performance. It appears to me, on the contrary, to be a sacred duty, sanctioned by scripture, most powerful in its effects, and incumbent on every Christian family to perform. Nor is it necessary to sacrifice to it the social enjoyments of the young or the avocations of the busy. The wise man has said, "There is a time for every thing." Surely then, ten or fifteen minutes may be found daily to worship God together! And why should family devotion interfere with prayer in private? Our Saviour frequently retired to pray to "his God and our God," yet the only form of prayer which he left his disciples is social, and implies that it should be offered up daily—it is short, yet meets all our wants. There is a common, but highly expressive saying, that "Wherever there is a will there is a way." Had we really the desire for this pious exercise, arrangements would soon be made in every family for its performance, choosing the hour which would suit best with its domestic habits and occupations.

Where the members are grown up and liable to be dispersed in the evening; or where difference of age sends the younger ones to retirement early, perhaps family prayer may have its most suitable place before breakfast—a meal which generally brings all the family together, and often with thoughts and feelings less under the excitement of worldly passions than in the evening. I cannot understand of whom the author speaks when he says, that "a large majority of the heads of families are disqualified by *nature* and *education* from presiding on such occasions." Does he mean that they cannot read their bibles, or repeat the Lord's prayer? If natural infirmity or ignorance prevents this, is there

no other member of the family who can officiate? Surely solemnity of tone is not the chief requisite in devotion. But if by educational disqualification he mean a distaste for scripture reading, formed in the pursuit of worldly knowledge, then I say that surely such a person unwarrantably depreciates the word of God. If he read his Bible, or any of its devotional books, the psalms, for instance, more frequently, he would find himself improved both in religious knowledge and religious taste.

To conclude; I agree with NEMO in thinking that a minister "should not indulge in indiscreet and offensive language." But I nevertheless think it is his bounden duty to urge and to stir up to the exercise of family prayer by every judicious means in his power, whether in the pulpit or in private. He should seek out and endeavour to obviate the causes of repugnance to this duty, afford facilities for its performance, either by friendly advice, by furnishing simple formularies, or by inspiring the young with a desire for it. At marriages, he should enjoin it as an important domestic duty, at baptisms he should repeat the injunction, and remove any remaining hesitation as to its performance; thus should he lead his flock by households till each would arrive, "no wanderer lost,—a family in heaven!" I have often thought that were Scotland dead as a nation, the noblest epitaph that could be engraven on her tombstone would be her "*Cotter's Saturday Night.*"

I have trespassed rather much on your pages, Mr. Editor, and in a strain which I fear will not charm all your readers. One word more and I have done. The new year is approaching; that season when all reflective minds review their conduct and remodel it, if necessary. Is it a vain hope to indulge, that bringing the subject of family worship before Bible Christians may induce them to give it a serious consideration? I am disposed to believe that many approve of it who have not courage to begin, or perhaps only revive the custom. I grant there are difficulties to be encountered; the cold indifference of some, the giddiness or even mockery of others, and worst of all that worldly gluttony of time which will not yield even a small portion to nourish religious feelings. But what may not zeal and affection accomplish? One heaven-inspired spirit in a family may organise and harmonise all. Let it be a work of love—no reproaches—no taunts, and surely God will prosper the pious undertaking.

O.

“**THY WILL BE DONE!**”

“O’ER my defenceless head the tempests lour,
 The waves of sin and death against me flow;
 Oh! Father save me from this dreadful hour—
 Yet for this cause came I on earth below;
 But if this cup of agony and woe
 May not, except I drink it, pass away;
 Father thy will be done—yea be it so,
 Lord of my life, I own thy sovereign sway.
 I yield my will to thine, and bless thee and obey.”

Oh! heavenly words; Oh! dayspring from on high,
 Thou who didst come in mercy and in love,
 To heal the broken heart, to chase the sigh,
 And dry the tear of sorrow—to remove
 The sting of sin and death, and who didst prove
 The grave’s destruction, and the sinner’s friend;
 To thee all power on earth, and heaven above,
 Was given by God—yet thou didst condescend
 For lost and guilty man, thy sacred head to bend!

Image of God!—the new and living way!
 Shall we, for whom thou diedst, thy counsel slight?
 Shall we renounce the king of Zion’s sway,
 Whose yoke is easy, and his burden light?
 No—when beneath the afflicting hand of might
 Our hopes are blighted, or our joys decay,
 Then, Saviour! then, be thy example bright,
 Our guide, our imitation, and our stay;
 Then may we meekly bow, and like our Lord obey.

When in this weary scene of war and strife,
 We are rejected and despised of men,
 Oh! may we emulate thy spotless life,
 Who when reviled didst not revile again;
 Oh! when some much loved hand inflicts the pain
 Of deep ingratitude, and proves untrue;
 If friends forsake us, or if foes arraign,
 “Father forgive! they know not what they do;”
 This be our prayer, and thus thy heaven-ward steps pursue.

Father! who dwellest enthroned in cloudless light,
 Thou, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain,
 Whose spirit fills creation—in whose sight
 Heaven is not pure, and angels are but vain;
 Thou, high and lofty one! dost not disdain
 The prisoner’s sigh, the sinner’s contrite tears;
 Thou, merciful and gracious! dost sustain
 Our morn of life, and our declining years,
 And from the bed of death dost chase our gloomy fears.

Father of love!—for thou didst love our race,
 And send the brightness of thy glory down
 To lighten our dim eyes, and through thy grace,
 Obtain for us free access to thy throne:
 We thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth! and own
 Him thy best gift, the shepherd of our soul;
 Teach us like him to win the immortal crown,
 And subjugate our wills to thy controul;
 Father! thy will be done, while endless ages roll!

LETTERS FROM FOREIGN CHURCHES, ON THE
GENEVESE JUBILEE.

WHEN the church of Scotland was invited by her sister, or rather, her *parent* church in Geneva, to unite in commemorating the æra of the Reformation, it might have been expected that, instead of returning a harsh and calumnious reply, she would have received the communication as a token of good will, and acknowledged it in a friendly spirit. If any doubts had existed, respecting either the soundness of the principles or the correctness of the practice of the Genevese church, an opportunity was now presented, by which they might have been set at rest. Had the members of the Scottish Assembly appointed a deputation to attend at the Jubilee, they might have satisfied themselves by personal observation, as to the correctness or erroneousness of the evil reports which had reached them. They might, at least, have *inquired* into the facts, before they condemned their ancient ally as an apostate, and cast her out of communion as no longer worthy of their sympathy. Had this course been followed, the General Assembly would have been enabled, either to pronounce sentence on grounds more solid than vague rumour and conjecture,—or to renounce their jealousies, suspicions and groundless surmises, entertained against a church endeared to them by so many old recollections, of so intimate and affecting a kind.

But this would have placed the church of Scotland in a dilemma. Like the other children of this world, she also is wise in her generation. She is aware that the recognition of a church like Geneva, which rejects all uninspired formulas and confessions of faith, would be inconsistent with her policy and her present position. She is conscious that an appeal to the Bible as the only standard of faith, would be to her a very dangerous measure. She knows that her influence and her existence depend on keeping up popular prejudices, and rest much more on sustaining, by means of these, the mystical and contradictory dogmatism of the Westminster divines, than on recommending the simple and unembarrassed precepts and doctrines of Christ and his apostles. She feels most sensibly that the religious light and freedom proclaimed in the blessed Gospel, are distorted, obscured, and curtailed, in the formula she has unhappily a-

dopted. And she is nervously alive to the painful conviction that, as soon as her people shall be satisfied with the Holy Scriptures as their only confession of faith, they will either renounce her spiritual guidance, or compel her to go forward to a thorough reformation.

The man must be wilfully blind to the signs of the times, who does not observe that this period of regeneration and refreshing is approaching with continually accelerated progress, and that it must arrive at no very distant day. Every effort made to retard it, only hastens its career. Even these disgraceful proceedings on the part of the Scottish general assembly towards the church of Geneva, though intended to obstruct the progress of Evangelical liberty, have been overruled by a kind Providence to open the eyes of many who had been deceived, to disabuse their minds of evil prejudices, and to give them a clearer insight into the secret machinations by which ecclesiastical domination is sustained in Presbyterian courts, under pretence of maintaining their confessions of faith, and adherence to antiquated formulas.

Under all these circumstances we pity, from our very hearts, the church of Scotland, and all such Presbyterian communities as have surrendered the liberty of the glorious gospel, and enslaved themselves to the thralldom of men's inventions. Instead of occupying as they ought to do, in this spirit-stirring age, a dignified and commanding station in the general church, as the champions of religious freedom,—instead of claiming that exemption from all human control in spiritual matters which is secured to them in the great charter of salvation, they are obliged to truckle to the dogmatical assumption of their frail fellow-mortals, to stifle and suppress the avowal of individual conviction, and virtually to submit to a domination similar to that from which their forefathers, the early reformers, emancipated themselves, at such a heavy expense of suffering and privation.

If any authority save that of Christ and his Apostles, is to bear sway in his church,—if “heavy burdens and hard to be borne” are to be laid upon men's consciences,—if religious liberty is to be invaded and trodden down,—and if a spiritual usurpation is to “lord it over God's heritage,”—it is of no consequence what may be the name or title of the tyrannical power which perpetrates these grievous wrongs,—whether it be Pope, Emperor, or King,—Cardinal, Bishop, or Presbyter,—council, con-

clave, or synod,—parliament, convocation, or general assembly. Whensoever any of these, or any other individual, or body of individuals, by whatever name they may be called, presume to interfere with the inalienable and sacred rights of conscience, or to set up their opinions, or rules, or traditions, or interpretations, in place of that only infallible guide which divine wisdom has bestowed upon mankind as the all-sufficient director,—then there is introduced the encroaching spirit of ecclesiastical usurpation which is subversive of christian liberty; and which, in whatever form it appears, whether of popery, prelacy, or presbytery, is the very same in substance, spirit, action, and design; and ought to be resisted, inexorably and unyieldingly, by every faithful guard of the citadel of truth; by every honest disciple who is resolved at all hazards to preserve inviolate his allegiance to the great captain of his salvation.

Turning from the rude bigotry and uncharitableness of the church of Scotland, which have impressed an indelible blot on this page of her history, we gladly lay before our readers some documents of a very different description. These have been selected from an immense mass of epistles, from protestant communities in different parts of Europe, all breathing the same spirit of warm and brotherly affection towards the church of Geneva. It will be seen that several churches claiming for themselves as high a name for orthodoxy, so called, as the Scottish General Assembly can pretend to, did not hesitate to respond to the courteous invitation of Geneva with Christian kindness and fraternal regard. Among these the communication from the Archbishop of Canterbury in the name of the prelates of the Established Church of England and Ireland, deserves to be particularly noticed. The urbanity displayed in his letter is worthy of his station as a Christian minister, and his character as a well-bred gentleman; and is remarkably contrasted with the clownish and ill-mannered conduct of the General Assembly. The Archbishop's letter is thus noticed in the official details of the jubilee in Geneva.

“Nor has the Church of England failed to transmit to that of Geneva the expression of her kind wishes and of her high interest, in a letter full of good will, written by the archbishop of Canterbury, in the name of the prelates of the United Church of England and Ire-

land. The obligation imposed upon the bishops of that church not to leave their diocese for any foreign mission will deprive us of the pleasure of seeing amongst us any deputy from them."

"Although we are extremely flattered," says the Archbishop, "by the desire expressed by the Venerable Company, to receive at the Jubilee, deputies representing the English Clergy, the practice of our church does not permit us to avail ourselves of this obliging invitation. But you may reckon upon our cordial sympathy; and I have much pleasure in expressing a hope that the solemn commemoration of an event, which was as glorious for Geneva, as propitious to the success of the Reformation, may be accompanied by an abundant effusion of spiritual blessings."

The following official letter from the court of Prussia in the name of all the Protestant churches in her extensive dominions, to the Pastors of Geneva, on occasion of the Jubilee, will be read with much interest. It has not yet appeared in any of the British journals. It will be seen from it, that though the reformed churches of Prussia retain the denomination of Calvinists, and pay to the memory of Calvin the honour which it merits, they follow his opinions, only "*dans tout ce qu'il a eu d'évangéliquement grand et de vraiment apostolique,*" and that they consider a church "*demeurer ferme et inébranlable dans la doctrine évangélique,*" only when it is founded "*sur la parole de Dieu qui seule est infaillable.*" This official document from the court of Prussia, affords a valuable testimony, most important at the present crisis, to the progress of reform amongst the continental churches. It must cheer the hearts and encourage the exertions of the non-subscribing Presbyterians in Ireland, to be thus assured that the cause which they have been vindicating so strenuously amidst calumny and persecution, prevails so widely in foreign countries; and that the sufficiency of the scriptures,—the great principle which forms the bond of this union, is so extensively recognised, among their Christian brethren in distant lands. The deputy appointed to be the representative of the churches of Prussia, was Dr. Gebser, Professor and Superintendant of the University of Königsburg.

(Translation.)

TO THE MODERATOR OF THE VENERABLE COMPANY OF
THE PASTORS OF GENEVA.

SIR,—His Majesty has received your communication of the 31st of last December, in which you inform all the evangelical clergy of

the Prussian monarchy, that you are preparing to celebrate the third centenary of the Reformation at Geneva. After having taken your letter into consideration, His Majesty has referred it, for answer, to the minister undersigned. The annexed document is destined to express to the Venerable Company, the interest we take in the festival which you are about to celebrate, and we request you to communicate it to that respectable body on the day of Jubilee.

(Signed)

ALTENSTEIN,

*Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs to His Majesty,
the King of Prussia.*

Berlin, July 30, 1835.

TO THE VENERABLE COMPANY OF THE PASTORS OF THE CANTON OF GENEVA.

"The undersigned minister of state cannot refrain from expressing to the Venerable Company of the Pastors of Geneva, as well in his own name as in that of all the evangelical clergy of the Prussian monarchy, the lively and profound interest which they take in this third centenary of the Reformation at Geneva.

When we consider the powerful effect which the Reformation in that city has had upon other countries, in propagating pure evangelical truth, and establishing the most appropriate religious forms; when we reflect on the salutary results which the Reform of the sixteenth century has produced upon the church and upon the faith,—upon all the aspects of life, and all the relations of civil society,—as well as on the considerable share which the church of Geneva can claim in this work;—when we think upon the happy influence which has been and is still exercised upon religious knowledge and practice by the distinguished doctors who have proceeded from her bosom; and especially by him who on account of his rare qualities, his vast learning, his fiery zeal, his heroic courage, and his strength of character, has principally directed this work, and has made for himself a name generally known and admired, and whose writings are still an abundant source of blessings:—when we weigh all those circumstances, it is impossible but that from every quarter of the evangelical church, and especially from the Prussian states, which gratefully rank themselves among those on whom the Reformation of Geneva has exercised a salutary influence,—all eyes should be turned with joy towards the church of Geneva, and with lively thanksgiving towards the throne of him who is the source of so many benefits:—it is impossible for us not to mingle our ardent vows, and fervent prayers, with the prayers and vows which on the 23d of August will ascend from Geneva to the God of mercy, to praise him, to bless him, and to implore his powerful protection for the time to come.

May the church of Geneva remain firm and unshaken, in the doctrine of the Gospel, by resting its foundation upon the word of God, which alone is infallible! May the light of pure Christian truth continue for ever to shine in the midst of it! May the spirit of its Reformer, in every thing that he possessed evangelically grand, and truly apostolic, reign for ever in that church! May it grow unceasingly, in knowledge, faith, charity, and hope! May it par-

take abundantly, and to the remotest times, of those blessings of which its return to the pure doctrines of the Gospel has been the source! May it, uniting to a Christian firmness, a moderation and wisdom likewise Christian, finally dispel every thing that may assail them!

May the whole evangelical church be penetrated with the sentiment that in spite of all differences in the outward forms of worship, and in some doctrines of minor importance, it can only be *one*; being erected on the same foundation, which is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever! May it, in this feeling, unanimously watch over its precious and dearly purchased treasure; unanimously struggle against every thing that could tend to deprive her of it,—unanimously pursue, with firmness and faith, imperishable blessings,—eternal salvation.

ALTENSTEIN,

*Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs to His Majesty,
the King of Prussia.*

Berlin, July 30, 1835.

Similar official communications were sent by the courts of other Protestant states on the continent; and from various churches and universities. The deputies from several of these are men of the highest distinction for erudition and talent, and whose literary labours have raised them to very elevated stations in their respective countries. Among these may be particularly mentioned, BRETSCHNEIDER, of Saxe Gotha, AMMON, of Dresden, and RÖHR, of Saxe Weimar. The official journal of Geneva announces the appointment of these distinguished men in the following terms: "The kingdom of Saxony has deputed to Geneva, the venerable and illustrious Doctor AMMON; first chaplain to the court, and member of the upper chamber of the states. The works of this theologian, his great celebrity, the high dignities with which he is invested, render this selection most honourable. M. Ammon has himself written to announce his speedy arrival in our walls. 'I shall have the honour,' he says, 'to assist at the third Jubilee of your church, our beloved sister in Jesus Christ, as deputy from the Protestant church of Royal Saxony, that tender nursing mother of the Reformation in the North of Germany.'"

"The Grand Duke, of Saxe Coburg and Gotha, by a special decision, of which a copy has been transmitted to Geneva, has resolved to depute the celebrated theologian, Doctor Bretschneider, superintendant general, and member of the Upper Consistory of Saxe Gotha; and the latter in a letter full of affection, announces his arrival.

“The Grand Duchy, of Saxe Weimar, has not been behind. Like the neighbour churches, she has deputed her first pastor, Doctor Röhr, superintendant general, a theologian, no less celebrated than those already named. ‘Be assured,’ writes the Consistory, ‘that on the day appointed for your festival, all the Protestant hearts of the Grand Duchy of Saxe Weimar, will unite, in our temples, their fervent prayers for the safety and stability of your Reformed church, *which, like our own, rests solely and entirely on the Holy Gospel, and on the eternal words of our Saviour.*’”

“Among these important circumstances, that which most strikes the mind is, that they indicate a happy epoch, in which all feelings of rivalry and of hostility have completely disappeared, between the Lutheran communion, and the churches of the Calvinistic Reformation. A clergy which only recognises the Bible for the rule of Faith, by that very act, establishes for a principle, love, esteem, and respect for every man who derives his sincere convictions from this sacred code, whatsoever be the differences which separate their convictions respectively.”*

To any mind that is sincerely impressed with genuine Christian feelings,—to any mind that receives the gospel as a system of boundless good will, and of brotherly kindness to the whole human race,—to any mind that is heartily disposed to embrace such a system, to act

* We are sure that we only do justice to our esteemed friend and correspondent, and to the church of Geneva, in guarding them both against the imputation of being supposed to express any approval of the opinions put forth by Dr. AMMON, and Dr. RÖHR. BRETSCHNEIDER, so far as appears from the only publication of his that has fallen into our hands, seems to be a writer of a very different, and a much superior stamp. If the marks of distinction paid to Ammon and Röhr at Geneva, be made matter of charge against the clergy of Geneva,—let it also be taken into account, that the only portions of their works which have hitherto been translated into English, have been so translated and published by the *Orthodox* Editors of the *Edinburgh Biblical Cabinet*, a work chiefly intended for students of the ministry, and sanctioned by the approval of Drs. Chalmers, Wardlaw, &c.; and the parts thus circulated, contain some of the most offensive passages in the whole of their works. Under these circumstances, it would be still more absurd to charge the errors of these theologians upon the church of Geneva, than it would be to impute them to the Kirk of Scotland. See the observations of Mr. Yates upon this point in the last number of the *Bible Christian*, p. 486—7. Ed.

upon it, and to show forth its efficacy by love towards all the disciples of Christ, without any distinction of church or sect, as the most certain evidence of attachment to the Redeemer himself,—to any such mind it must afford the greatest satisfaction, to observe from these documents that the spirit of evangelical charity is diffusing itself so widely amongst our fellow Christians on the continent of Europe. The minor distinctions by which they have heretofore been separated, have for some time been gradually melting away, and are now rapidly sinking into oblivion. It is not the authority of the Augsburg Confession, nor of the Helvetic Confession, but the authority of the Holy Scriptures, that they are zealous to maintain. It is not Luther, or Calvin, or Zwingle, that they acknowledge as their spiritual guides,—but Jesus Christ, the only head of the church, and his inspired apostles; and whatever veneration they may feel for the memory of their Reformers, this neither leads them to palliate their faults, nor to close their eyes against their errors and imperfections.

The following letter from the class or Synod of IVERDON and ORBE, in the canton of Vaud, with the reply of the Pastors of Geneva, exhibits a beautiful specimen of Christian concord and brotherly love among churches entertaining very different opinions on some theological tenets. We have great pleasure in laying this correspondence before our readers, because it evinces in practice what we have always maintained in principle, that, wherever the true spirit of Christian charity is cultivated, a difference in speculative opinions will not be permitted to interrupt a friendly intercourse, or to cool the ardour of brotherly love among those who worship the same God, and believe in the same Redeemer.

REPLY OF THE SYNOD OF IVERDON AND ORBE, CANTON DE VAUX.

To the Moderator and Members of the Venerable Company of Pastors of Geneva.

GENTLEMEN, AND HONOURED BRETHREN,—We have received, with gratitude, your letter of the 31st December, 1854, in which you invite us to take a part in your Reformation Jubilee, and request the communion of our prayers.

We regard it as a duty to present to God on this occasion, especial prayers and supplications for you, Gentlemen, and for all the

portions of his church, and we shall implore our Divine Master, that this festival may be signalized by an abundant effusion of His Holy Spirit.

We also accept the invitation which you have been pleased to transmit. We think it our duty, however, to explain with frankness, the object which we propose, in sending deputies on this solemn occasion. We intend to celebrate, with you, Gentlemen and Honoured Brethren, the fact of the blessed Reformation, and of the right which it has consecrated, to free men from all human authority in matters of faith, in order to subject them to the sole authority of the Word of God. But this right of free inquiry, may be appealed to, under many different systems. For ourselves, we must declare that it has led us to cherish increasingly the evangelical doctrines, as they have been preached by the Reformers, and expressed in the Confession of Faith of the churches of Switzerland:—a formulary which we regard, not as an authority, but as the faithful expression of those doctrines. We have commissioned our Dean, M. MELLET, pastor of Pomy, and M. BAUTY, pastor at Sentier, who will represent us, to declare, if necessary, in a formal manner, that such are our sentiments, in this respect.

Receive, Gentlemen and Honoured Brethren, our prayers that God may load your church, with his most precious blessings.

(Signed,)

L. MELLET, *Pastor, Dean of the Synod.*

L. BERGER, *Secretary.*

Iverdon, 10th June, 1835.

LETTER OF THE VENERABLE COMPANY TO THE SYNOD OF IVERDON AND ORBE.

Geneva, June 27, 1835.

GENTLEMEN AND HONOURED BRETHREN,—The V. C. has received with gratitude, the brotherly communication, by which you have replied to its letter of the 31st of last December. The V. C. thanks you for the communion of your prayers, and will hear as brethren and receive with respect, the distinguished men, who are commissioned to represent you at our assembly. Faithful to the exclusive authority of the Bible, not only as a principle of liberty but as a standard of truth, peace, and life, we understand and we accept all the consequences. Besides, diversities of interpretations will the less surprise us in our brethren, as they also exist among ourselves.

The authority of the Bible triumphant over that of men, is the circumstance which the church of Geneva, especially celebrates in its Jubilee. This great recollection will be the soul of our festival; and the Bible opened to the eyes of all will be displayed upon our two medals, as upon the seal of your synod.

In consideration of the boundless blessing of the Bible restored to the church, all those who acknowledge Jesus for their Master and his word for truth, may well, as it seems to us, notwithstanding some difference of opinion, unite in the same prayers, within the same temple, whilst blessing the same God.

We congratulate ourselves, Gentlemen and Honoured Brethren, on your agreement with us in this sentiment; and we beg you to accept with our brotherly wishes, the assurance of our high consideration and of our sincere attachment.

(Signed,) 23. 1797

J. CHOISY, Professor,

Secretary to the Venerable Company.

The canton of BERNE, which is justly considered as at the head of the Swiss confederacy, does great honour both to itself and to Geneva, in the cordial and affectionate letter addressed by the church of the Republic to the Genevese Pastors. Our space will not permit us to give more than an extract from this admirable document.

EXTRACT FROM THE ANSWER OF THE SYNOD OF BERNE.

Berne, June 30, 1835.

* * * How could it be possible for us to forget at this moment, and when you address to us an invitation so fraternal, the intimate relations which have united the reformed churches of Geneva and of Berne, since the first days of their new existence? Has not your church amply rewarded ours, for having been its support in the first steps of religious liberty, by returning to us the light of its doctrine and the counsels of its wisdom? And can we forget all that God has done for the advancement of his kingdom upon earth, by kindling, through the efficacy of his spirit, the lamp of the Gospel, in the city of Geneva, to shine afar, on the face of the nations?

We also would remain faithful to the principles of the Reformation; faithful to the fundamental truths of Christianity which it has proclaimed, which are contained in the Gospel; and which thence beam forth with still increasing splendour, the more that free inquiry, guided by the spirit of truth shall dissipate the shades of human opinions;—faithful also to the principles of toleration and of brotherly charity; which, whilst it resists error, never repels or condemns those who are in error. For we have faith in the power of truth, and of him who guides us thither.

From these feelings and principles, we accept, with gratitude and joy, your invitation, honoured and beloved brethren! persuaded as we are, that the solemn commemoration of the divine work wrought through the Reformers, will not remain without a blessing; will confirm us all in the principles of the Gospel, and of the Reformation; and will strengthen the ties which unite us in a common feeling of gratitude to God, and of brotherly love.

The deputies appointed by the Synod, whom we request you to receive as our representatives, are M. STIERLIN, President of the Synod, M. WYSS, Vice-president, M. MOREL, Dean, and M. BASSEGER, Secretary to the Synod.

From the Synods or consistories of the Protestant churches of France, communications were addressed to

the church of Geneva, all breathing the same spirit of fraternal kindness and union, of attachment to religious liberty, and of profound veneration for the holy scriptures, as the only unerring guide of belief and conduct. Out of a great variety of letters from reformed churches in all parts of France, we shall give extracts from three, viz. from the consistory of PARIS, the consistory of NISMES, and the church of HAVRE. These will be sufficient to show to our readers, not only the high estimation in which the church of Geneva is universally held, but the wide and rapid progress of pure Bible christianity over the continent of Europe.

EXTRACT FROM THE ANSWER OF THE CONSISTORY OF
THE REFORMED CHURCH OF PARIS.

Paris, 28th April, 1835.

* * * The history of Geneva offers a noble example of the energy and influence which religion, when brought back to the purity of its source, has given to a small nation; and the history of the reformed churches proclaims the honourable rank which that powerless city has occupied among them by the influence of religion, learning and morality.

In both these points of view, the return of the anniversary of the Genevese Reformation, must excite a lively sympathy in all portions of the evangelical reformed church; and the churches of France, in particular, will, upon this occasion, feel the recollection of the intimate and precious relations which they have maintained and still maintain with that of Geneva, powerfully rekindled.

The consistory has appointed M. MONON, sen. to repair to Geneva at this epoch, as its deputy to the Venerable Company. Our choice of this pastor will appear to you an additional proof of the sincerity of those good wishes which he will be charged to express, in the name of the church of Paris.

We pray the Lord, on this occasion, to renew upon your church his most abundant blessings; and to cause the solemn festival of this year to contribute to strengthen more and more, the ties of brotherhood, which ought to unite all churches that profess the pure Gospel. — * * *

(Signed,)

LAFFON DE LADEBAT,

Secretary to the Consistory.

EXTRACT FROM THE ANSWER OF THE CONSISTORY OF
THE REFORMED CHURCH OF NISMES.

Nismes, June 27, 1835.

* * * If the freedom of religious opinion, which Geneva has been the first in fairly trying, has produced in her own bosom and around her, discrepancies, and even deep diversities in the manner

of contemplating some mysterious parts of Christianity, we have not deemed this a reason for refusing to her the communion of our prayers. It has on the contrary seemed to us to be the more urgently our duty, to implore, with her and for her, the Father of Spirits, that he may cause his truth to shine forth, and especially that he may remove from the minds of men, all those passions by which they are darkened. We hope that your profound attachment to the Gospel, your spirit of toleration and of peace, will turn to the good of the church and to the progress of piety, this crisis, which others as well as you experience. Christianity will emerge from it, we confidently trust, more powerful and more pure. In it, is life and truth. You wish, we wish, for nothing besides it! May God be pleased to crown your efforts and ours, to understand and feel it thoroughly; and to cause it to fructify in the hearts of those who hear us.

M. FERDINAND FONTANES, Pastor of Nismes, and M. DURAND, of Castres, Deputies from the Consistory, have agreed to depart for Geneva, in company.

(Signed,)

VINCENT,

President of the Consistory of Nismes.

EXTRACT FROM THE ANSWER OF THE REFORMED CHURCH AT HAVRE.

* * * Your festival is also ours; we feel as you do, all the importance of the benefits which the religious Reformation effected in your city, three centuries ago, has produced to the world, and especially to France. We see as the consequences of this event, light triumphant over darkness;—the authority of the Bible triumphant over the authority of men;—freedom of inquiry and of belief triumphant over that barbarous despotism, which held conscience in slavery, and proscribed as a crime the exercise of some of the noblest faculties, which the Creator has bestowed on man.

The Bible established as the sole authority in matters of faith; liberty for each individual to examine this divine book, and to deduce according to his own judgment, the articles of belief which he there finds established, without ever being obliged to subject his faith to the interpretation of men fallible as himself,—and as a consequence, *the duty* of every Christian to tolerate those among his brethren who in virtue of their right of inquiry have formed opinions different from his own, and to leave to God alone the charge of excluding from salvation those whom his justice will find undeserving of it,—these are to us, as to you, the great principles which the religious Reformation of the sixteenth century has re-established; and which will cause us to bless for ever the memory of the courageous men who achieved it.

We hope that these principles, which, in our eyes, are the only certain pledge of truth, peace and life for the Christian world, will eventually triumph over the obstacles which they still meet with, in various places.

You are called, Gentlemen, by Providence, to contend, in the foremost rank, in defence of toleration and of liberty. We pray God that he may strengthen you in this glorious struggle; and that he may aid you to destroy the spiritual tyranny of those blinded men, who, in the Protestant as in the Catholic world, yet claim to themselves the dismal privilege of condemning their brethren in the name of the God "*who is love*," and of judging them in the name of the book of glad tidings, which has said, "*judge not!*" Then you will have worthily completed the work of the Reformers. We invite with all our prayers, this happy result, relying with an entire confidence on the protection of the Most High; and on that power of faith, of knowledge and of talent which he has shed upon you in so great abundance. If you attach any importance to the fact, that a church, firm in its faith, is united to you, heart and soul,—applauds your efforts, and would sincerely wish that its feeble aid were worthy of being tendered to you,—I esteem it a pleasure to announce to you, that such are the dispositions of the Reformed church of Havre.

(Signed,) *N. POULAIN, Pastor.*

In recording so many instances of respect and affection exhibited towards the church of Geneva, that free and fearless asserter of religious truth and freedom, by our brethren in so many countries on the continent of Europe: we cannot help expressing our regret that the British islands seemed to take so little concern in an epoch of the reformed church so deeply interesting to all Protestant communities. The church of Scotland availed herself of the occasion, only to exhibit such spiritual pride, 'presumption, and bigotry, as have covered her with shame. The Dissenters of England of every class, including even the Unitarians, manifested on the occasion a cold and heartless indifference that must be perfectly astonishing to the Genevese, who no doubt confidently expected an overflowing of brotherly sympathy from the representatives and descendants of those virtuous and pious men who, more than a century ago, united with them in the rejection of human formularies,—and in maintaining that the holy scriptures are the only confession of faith for the disciples of Christ. It is true, indeed, that the English Dissenters were represented in Geneva by a zealous, able, and intrepid advocate of religious freedom and Bible Christianity, the Rev. James Yates: but he, it appears, came there without any credentials, save those of his own high and merited celebrity. Why was not this eminent divine deputed as the authorised representative of the religious

body of which he has been so long a distinguished ornament, and whose principles he has so ably illustrated and defended? We cannot for a moment, suppose, that our brethren in England are indisposed to express their deep interest for the concerns of a church which, like themselves, zealously vindicates the rights of conscience; and we can only ascribe their oversight on this occasion to their want of union and co-operation, a fatal defect in their system, which we should fear, will not only prevent their increase but ultimately annihilate them as a public body.

It is very gratifying to us to record, that the Presbyterians of Ireland have exhibited on this interesting occasion, a degree of respectful attention highly honourable to themselves, towards the church which they, in conjunction with the church of Scotland, acknowledge as their common mother, and to which they are so deeply indebted. The letter of the Synod of Ulster to the Venerable Company of Pastors, though a little tinged with dogmatical theology, is respectful, frank, and cordial. It breathes a very different spirit from the horrible calumnies which were uttered six years ago in that Reverend Assembly, against the church of Geneva. We hail with sincere delight the appearance of increasing mildness and charity evinced in their letter; and we have only to regret, that a deputation from their body did not visit Geneva to witness how Christian brethren of varying opinions could meet together in harmony and love, that they might import into their own Synod, the imitation of so pleasing an example of Christian unity and concord.

As the non-subscribing Presbyterians of Ireland, were the only body of British Protestants represented at this great assembly of the reformed churches, our readers will no doubt be desirous to know what were the sentiments expressed by the deputation. After the various delegates from Germany, Prussia, and France, had been called upon by the Venerable Company to present their credentials, and had offered their fraternal salutations in terms worthy of their office as representatives of Christian communities,—the deputation from Ireland was the next invited to take a place in the Assembly. On presenting the official letter, the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, of Dublin, who was at the head of the deputation, expressed himself to the following effect, to the Moderator and Venerable Company:—

"My very dear brethren in Jesus Christ our Lord,

"The salutations offered to you by the venerable deputations from the churches of Germany, Prussia, and France, have been heard by me with much emotion. The sentiments of Christian affection which they have so touchingly expressed, are equally honourable to you, to themselves, and to the churches which they represent. In all those sentiments I most cordially sympathise; and, on the part of our churches in Ireland, I have to declare our full participation in the fraternal good will, in the respectful greetings, in the prayers for your prosperity, union, and peace, which have been uttered in this assembly with such deep emotion, and have been heard with such lively sensibility.

"But, dear and honoured brethren! permit us to go farther than they have gone. The salutations you have hitherto heard are only *fraternal*; they are conveyed to you from churches allied to yours as *sisters* of the same family. But as to us, *we* claim a relation much more intimate, and more dear. The church of Geneva is to us a *mother*. From her maternal bosom our fathers, three centuries ago, imbibed the pure milk of the word of God—the holy nourishment of the gospel of truth. As children, far removed in person from their home, but always attached to that home in heart and in soul, do we bear to our dearest mother, from a distant land, the tribute of our fervent affection, and the tender congratulations of filial love.

"As Geneva was the mother and instructress of our churches in their infancy, so has she ever since been their example and their guide. We have profited by that example. She was the foremost in carrying forward the work of the Reformation, commenced by those eminent men that have adorned her history, and whose memory is so deservedly cherished. We have followed in her steps. She was the first of the reformed churches that vindicated the right of private judgment, asserted the free examination of the holy scriptures, broke asunder those chains and fetters which human authority had imposed upon religious freedom, acknowledged the Bible alone as the sovereign rule of faith and worship, emancipated herself from the burthen of uninspired confessions, and threw off every yoke save that of the Son of God, who alone 'is the way, the truth, and the life.'

"She was, also, the first of the reformed churches which proclaimed to mankind the universal love, and the boundless charity inculcated in the gospel of our divine master. She was the first that extended the right hand of fellowship and fraternity to Christians of every church and denomination, and to the whole human race. She was the first that acted on the divine principle that 'God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted of him.' In all this splendid career it is our pride and our boast that we have been among the first to imitate her example, and to tread in the same path. The same principles by which she has been so long and so eminently distinguished, are firmly maintained by those Presbyterian bodies which we have the honour to represent. For more than a century they have been zealously advocated by two of these bodies, the Synod of MUNSTER, and the Presbytery of ANTRIM. The third

body, the REMONSTRANT Synod of ULSTER, has been recently formed upon the same foundation; and has at length secured its religious freedom after a noble struggle against intolerance and bigotry.

"Permit us, therefore, Venerable Friends and Brethren, in the name of these Irish bodies to present to you our most affectionate salutations; and to pray that the eternal God may shed upon you his choicest blessings; may give you union, peace, and happiness; and may continue to render your church, as he has hitherto done, a faithful, firm, and impregnable bulwark, in defence of the pure and undefiled religion of his beloved Son."

REVIEW.

The Works of William Ellery Channing, D. D. Vol. II. pp. 500. Hedderwick and Sons, Glasgow, 1835.

THIS beautiful and correct edition of the Works of Dr. Channing is now complete, and truly rejoiced we are to have it in our power to direct the lovers of truth and liberty to it as to a pure and perennial fountain, from which they may imbibe the holy principles of genuine and unadulterated christianity. There is no class of readers for whom appropriate mental nourishment is not provided in the admirable volumes now before us. The literary reader will turn with deep interest to those pages in which Dr. Channing has reviewed the life and writings of the angelic MILTON, with a profundity and originality of thought akin to that of him who is the subject of the discourse. He will be rewarded for the perusal by an analysis of the sublime and beautiful in poetry, and a deeply searching investigation of the higher principles of criticism, to which the English language presents nothing equal, nothing to be compared. The politician will find ample materials for reflection in the philosophical estimate of the character of NAPOLEON: a work which, by a few master strokes of eloquence, dispels the illusions that great achievements, high talents, and splendid success had thrown around a character, so often made the object of insane flattery while living, and of not less insane admiration since his death. The patriot and philanthropist will ponder with deep attention the lessons which are contained in the Thoughts on Power and Greatness;—the Considerations on National Literature,—and the Discourse on War. The Christian will find in the sermons on the origin of the Gospel one of the clearest and most comprehensive statements of the Christian Evidences, that has ever come under our

notice ; and in the various other treatises which the edition contains are presented, able, and energetic defences of the principles of civil and more especially of religious liberty ; copious and convincing arguments in support of the simple doctrines of primitive Christianity, as opposed to human corruptions by which it has so often been deformed and disgraced ; and appeals most persuasive and powerful, to the understanding and the feelings, enforcing the pure and holy results, to which the religion of the Gospel necessarily leads. It is the great merit of Dr. Channing as a writer, that while his intellect is capable of grasping the most abstruse and difficult subjects, he places the various steps and results of his investigations in a light so clear and striking, that they are obvious to the perceptions of the least reflecting. And to this it is owing, that while the volumes before us contain so much of interest and attention of the most abstract philosophical reasoner, they are, at the same time, not less calculated to impress the mind of the plain unlearned reader. Hence we can cordially recommend them as containing one of the best collections with which we are acquainted of family sermons, such as might be read with advantage to the children and servants of an ordinary household. In truth one of the best discourses which the volume contains is one expressly on the duties of children. We might recommend the works of Dr. Channing to the ministers of religion, as a noble monument and example of what has been achieved in the discharge of the duties of their calling, by one of their fellow-workmen. If the triumphs of the pulpit be, to make the hearer attentive, inquiring, humble ;—to send him from the place of worship forgetful of the preacher, thoughtful only of himself and his own condition ;—to inspire the sentiments of shame, grief, remorse for evils done, or talents unimproved ;—to fill the soul with a holy love and admiration of that which is pure, innocent, and good ;—to arm the mind with faith unwavering, fortitude unshaking, and perseverance not to be turned aside,—if these be the triumphs of the pulpit,—then is the brow of Dr. Channing unincompassed with a wreath of unfading laurels. We know not the writer who has more completely attained these objects.

The Second Volume, which has lately appeared, completes this elegant, uniform, and correct edition. To

those who have previously procured the first volume we need say nothing. They will of their own accord hasten to possess themselves of its companion. Those who have not yet purchased either we would exhort to buy both, without delay. All who have these volumes we exhort to read, study and reflect upon them;—to speak of them, to lend them, and to recommend them. By putting them into an extensive circulation they will disseminate the good seed of just and liberal Christian sentiments, —which cannot but produce, in time, an abundant harvest of valuable fruit.

REVIEW.

“The Sect everywhere spoken against:”—Two Sermons preached at Newry, in October, 1835, and published at the request of the Congregation. By the Rev. JOHN MITCHEL, Newry, 1835. pp. 35. 8vo.

IN our last notice of this publication, after adverting to the very gratifying testimony of approval contained in a unanimous vote of thanks to Mr. Mitchel, from his congregation, for preaching the discourses which it contains,—and in their resolution requesting him to allow them to be printed,—we proceeded to give a brief analysis of the topics on which the author touches in the first of the sermons before us. We now resume our observations for the purpose of introducing to our readers, the principal subjects discussed in the second discourse.

In pursuing his observations on the charges which are commonly preferred against the Worshipers of ONE GOD, THE FATHER, “*the sect*” which, in modern times, is “*every where spoken against*,” Mr. M. adverts to an accusation which is very frequently advanced; and, in fact, forms with many, the chief ground of odium and obloquy in which they are held; viz, that they undervalue the redemption that is Christ Jesus; that they treat it as a subject of little or no importance; that they have, in fact, no faith in a crucified Saviour. We believe there is no one who is in the habit of listening to the addresses of those ministers, and the conversations of those other emissaries, who have signalized their zeal in opposition to that “*which they call heresy*,” who will not admit that this is the charge which is, of all others, most frequently preferred; and which, of all others, produ-

ces the greatest effect on the minds of the usual auditors. In replying to this accusation, Mr. M. first with explicitness and charity, states his own view of the death and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. "There is," he says, "evidently, but one or other of three views which can be taken of this subject. Christ must have suffered, either as *God*—or as *man*,—or as *an intermediate being*. The first we hold to be *impossible* ;—the second we hold to be *unwarranted* ;—the third we regard as *true* ; and we leave it, not to the exclusive readers of trinitarian tracts,—but to the honest and intelligent readers of the Bible, to decide for themselves, which of these views is formed on the Holy Scriptures." Respecting the degree of importance and efficacy which is to be ascribed to the *mediation* and especially to the *death* of Christ, Mr. M. makes the following statement ; which we regard as so eminently just, reasonable and scriptural, that every unprejudiced follower of the faith of the New Testament, must, we think, on reflection, pronounce it "worthy of all acceptance."

"Whilst we regard the offering up of the MESSIAH as a "propitiation for the sins of the world," we do not look upon the death of the REDEEMER as appeasing the wrath, or conciliating the favour of God to sinners :—because the Scriptures plainly teach us to regard the whole arrangements of Gospel grace, displayed in the coming, and the mediation, and the death of CHRIST, as having originated in the antecedent love and mercy of the great Father of all. For you know it is the express declaration of our SAVIOUR Himself, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And you know the corresponding declaration of His Apostle John,—"*In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.*" "Herein," saith He, "is love—not that we loved God, but that He first loved us." The mediation of CHRIST is not, we think, represented to us in the Gospel, as the *procuring cause* of the Father's love, but, on the contrary, the Father's love is there distinctly described as having been the *procuring cause* of the mediation of CHRIST, and of all the invaluable blessings which are thereby secured to the true believer. The great and blessed effect of the whole arrangement, accordingly is,—not to reconcile God to man ;—that is not what is wanted ;—but, on the contrary, to reconcile man to God ; that is what is wanted. It is man who is at enmity,—at enmity with God by his wicked works : and the great and gracious design of the coming and death of CHRIST is just to do away that enmity, and to set us at peace with our Maker ; and the earnest, the uniform entreaty of the Gospel of CHRIST, addressed to the sinful children of men, is just this—"Be ye reconciled unto God."

"But this, you will observe, is not the view which Calvinism presents of this subject. Calvinism would lead you, on the contrary, to suppose that the great Father of the Universe was an inexorable judge, in whom there was no *free grace* or *voluntary mercy*; and who was prepared to have plunged our guilty race into endless perdition, had not His arm of vengeance been, as it were almost contrary to His own will, arrested by the interposition of His Son,—to whose pity and compassion, therefore, and not that of the Father, sinners (and that but a portion of them, arbitrarily chosen,) must exclusively owe their redemption. What a strange—what an astonishing perversion is here of the doctrine of CHRIST! and with what eyes do they look into the Scriptures, who can find such a system there!" p. 23.

Another imputation too generally cast upon Unitarians, is, that they rest their hope of salvation on the merits of their own righteousness, and set an unwarranted estimation upon the value of their good works.

"Now, it might be sufficient, in reply to this accusation, to ask,—upon what ground is it advanced? Or is there any evidence of the fact? I believe and am persuaded there is none.

"For my own part, I know that this charge does not apply to me:—nor am I acquainted with any human being to whom it applies; and, though I have conversed upon this subject with many persons, of various denominations, I have never yet met with an individual of any creed, whose sentiments should expose him to a charge of this nature. Do not all Christians humbly confess themselves sinners before God? Do not all Christians earnestly solicit pardon from God, in the name and through the mediation of CHRIST? Do not all Christians look for salvation to the mercy of God, through the redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS? Do not these things, brethren, constitute the substance of our preaching, the burthen of our prayers, and the foundation of our hopes? And why, therefore, should such slanderous accusation be brought against us?" p. 25.

The last of the accusations against believers in ONE GOD, THE FATHER, which Mr. Mitchel examines, is the allegation that they scarcely deserve the name of Protestants: that they are rather friendly to Popery; and would have little objection to see a popish ascendancy established in this country. False, absurd, and ridiculous as this assertion must appear to every reflecting mind, we know that it is extensively believed. In fact, more than half of the opposition which Unitarianism has encountered in the North of Ireland, has arisen from political rather than religious causes. It is *Orangeism* more than *Orthodoxy*, that has excited the disturbances with which so many congregations of our persuasion have been visited or threatened; and kindled the animosities by which society has been torn asunder. On this subject Mr. M. states and ably vindicates the

principles of perfect religious toleration which Unitarians hold, with reference to all their fellow Christians; and from the benefit of which the Roman Catholics are not excluded. But the imputation of looking upon the peculiar doctrines of the Roman Church with approbation, he treats with just contempt.

“Vile and shameless calumny! The authors of it know it well—that we long and earnestly contended with what we take to be the very worst ingredients of Popery, in the General Synod of Ulster—the virtual claim of infallibility, and the hateful spirit of intolerance;—for, wherever these things exist, there is the spirit of Popery: and that, rather than remain subject to so foul a yoke, we perilled everything dear to men in this life, to escape from the house of bondage. This evil spirit we hope and believe to be on the decline among our Roman Catholic brethren; and soon may it die, wherever it exists.

“The authors and circulators of this calumny know well—that we stand at a much wider and more irreconcilable distance from the leading doctrines of the Church of Rome, than they themselves. That Church has the Athanasian creed as the symbol of her faith; and all the so-called *Orthodox* Churches among Protestants have built upon the very same foundation. They are, therefore, in perfect agreement with her, in everything relating to what they mutually profess to regard as the very foundation of Christianity. Upon this fundamental point, however, as all the world knows, we stand on the other side,—we are the very antipodes to both.” p. 28.

The conclusion of this discourse affords so many striking passages of excellent sense and powerful reasoning that we are tempted to continue our extracts; but our space is limited and we must forbear. We rejoice to be informed that since our last notice of this publication, the whole of a large impression, (1500 copies,) has been sold off. We should be sorry, however, that its circulation should stop even at these wide limits; and would earnestly recommend a re-impression of these discourses to be undertaken, with the author's leave, either by the Irish Unitarian Christian Society, or the Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge. We would recommend those who may act on this suggestion, to adhere to the praiseworthy example which the present publishers have set, by selling the little work before us at so cheap a rate. The *dearness* of Unitarian books has greatly impeded their circulation in those quarters where they would be most useful; but never have we known an instance in which authors or publishers have brought them within the reach of those who cannot afford to buy expensive works, without feeling all their reasonable expectations with regard to the sale more than answered.

REVIEW.

The Union and Reciprocal Influences of Science and Religion: a Discourse occasioned by the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and published at the request of many who heard it preached. By WILLIAM H. DRUMMOND, D. D., M. R. I. A.—Dublin, Hodges and Smyth. Belfast, Archer—8vo. pp. 24.

THIS discourse is worthy of Dr. Drummond's high character as a philosopher, a theologian, and a pulpit orator. We can scarcely say more in its commendation, than is implied in the fact, that although our expectations had been highly excited by the accounts which we had received from some who heard it delivered,—its appearance in print has more than realised them all; nor do we wonder at the deep and general anxiety which prevailed, among the congregation, to have it published.

The preacher takes his *texts*, (for there are *two*,) from PSALM, xix. 1. and cxi. 2. After a brief introduction, on the alliance between natural and revealed religion, Dr. Drummond adduces many passages of scripture, wherein the sacred writers refer to the operations of nature as teaching the knowledge of God, and as calculated to inspire devout sentiments in the heart of man.

“What stirred in David such emotions of fervent piety, as the contemplation of the wonderful works of God in heaven, in the earth, the sea, and all deep places? “The heavens,” said he, “declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” Read the 104th Psalm, and see how he exalts the power, the majesty, the goodness of the Creator, by describing him as clothed with light—careering on the clouds as his chariot—walking on the wings of the wind—making the tempests and lightnings the agents of his mandates—rebuking the floods and fixing their impassable bounds—anon, clothing the earth with the exuberance of his bounty—ordering the seasons—supplying the wants of every living creature—assigning to each its proper habitation—and evincing his uncontrollable dominion over all animated existence, by withdrawing his vital breath, or sending forth his spirit to renovate the face of the earth. Well might he declare after such a noble survey of creation, “The glory of Jehovah shall endure for ever—Jehovah shall rejoice in his works.” Yes,—he describes the ever-blessed God as rejoicing to behold those glories of the universe, which he has spread before the eyes of man to excite his admiration, and stimulate his industry in searching them out.” p. 7, 8.

Dr. D. next discusses the religious effect of the study of nature upon the mind; and here we must regret that it is impossible for us to do justice to the conclusive rea-

soning and impressive eloquence which this part of the discourse contains. We can only insert the following sentences, in which,—though torn from their connexion,—felicity of allusion, and beauty and energy of diction, combine to form a passage of exceeding power.

“Not only do those objects in creation which we denominate great, on account of their magnitude, but those which are least, contain conspicuous evidence of the Creator's power and wisdom. The same observation made in Scripture of TIME with respect to the Deity, may be made of SPACE. It is written that “a thousand years are to THE ETERNAL as one day, and one day as a thousand years.” May we not affirm that to THE INFINITE a thousand leagues are as one ell, and one ell as a thousand leagues? Whatever we conceive possible to be done, can be done by the Omnipotent. The revolutions of centuries are to him but as a moment. The dimensions of the solar system are to him but as the circumference of an artificial globe; and he shows the wonders of creative power not less in the animalcules of a drop of water, than in the finny shoals, the whales and leviathans, that tempest the ocean. The same power that kindled the solar fires, that girded with its belts the vast planetary orb of Jupiter, and encircled Saturn with a luminous ring, also kindled the tiny glow-worm's lamp, tinted the pearly dome of the shell-fish with the hues of the morning, and wove the filmy texture of the midge's wing. In the fibres of a moss—in the structure of a fly, what matchless contrivance and beauty! The most exquisitely finished works of art when subject to the scrutiny of a microscope, appear coarse and deformed—but the works of God on the contrary, appear ten-fold more beautiful. It is only when subjected to such a scrutiny that their matchless beauty, their brilliant colouring and gorgeous panoply become manifest. Then does the corolla of a flower grow with richer crimson, and the dots on a beetle's shard equal or surpass the burnished splendor of the emerald, the chrysolite and ruby in the diadem of kings.” p. 10.

Many such passages are to be found in this admirable composition. Indeed the whole discourse is one continuous strain of highly wrought eloquence, which is worthy of the illustrious theme that it describes. The form alone is prose; the thoughts are instinct with the poetry of feeling and of truth.

In the third portion of his discourse, Dr. Drummond points out the influence of religion upon science; and in an animated peroration, applies the subject of the sermon, to the occasion by which it was suggested. For his observations upon these subjects, we are compelled to refer our readers to the publication itself; and sure we are, that any lover of nature and of the Bible who may be led to peruse it in consequence of those remarks, will thank us for calling his attention to a production so interesting and so elevating, as that now before us.

Intelligence.

REMONSTRANT CONGREGATION OF CARRICKFERGUS.

THE Presbyterian Congregation of Carrickfergus, in connexion with the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster has, since its foundation, been labouring under the greatest inconvenience from want of a suitable house of worship; and aware of the check that is thus put upon their farther usefulness and respectability, the members of the Congregation appeal to the liberality of the Christian Public for assistance, towards erecting a suitable Meeting-house.

The Congregation was formed in the year 1831, by a number of individuals uniting themselves together for the worship of God, and the maintenance of religious liberty, freedom of conscience, and the unrestricted right of private judgment.

In the year 1834, the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, after due inquiry into their number, character, and resources, admitted and recognised them as a Presbyterian Congregation under its care.

On the 19th of July, 1835, a call was unanimously given to the Rev. JAMES MALCOM, requesting him to become their stated Minister, who was accordingly, on the month of September following, regularly ordained among them.

The congregation is now taking active steps towards erecting a convenient Meeting-house; for which purpose they have already collected in Carrickfergus and the neighbourhood, the sum of £150. But as it cannot be expected that from their own resources alone they can possibly accomplish this end, it is respectfully solicited, that their liberal Christian friends in other quarters will lend their generous support to this infant society, *in the maintenance of free inquiry, and the spread of religious knowledge.*

Subscriptions will be thankfully received by the Rev. J. Malcom, Carrickfergus, or any member of the Congregation.

Carrickfergus, January, 1836.

WILSON'S ILLUSTRATIONS OF UNITARIANISM.

THE lovers of scriptural truth will be gratified to learn, that the whole impression of this excellent and most useful work has been sold off, and that the author proposes, if he meet with sufficient encouragement, to issue another with additions and improvements. We would most earnestly direct the attention of our readers to this proposal, which we think in every point of view, deserving of public support. As a calm, sober, and scriptural work, it yields to none, that has yet appeared upon the subject. The information it contains, is extensive and correct; the arrangement is such as renders its contents doubly valuable to the student of scripture. We must add, that as the work of a person who in the intervals of leisure allowed by a laborious employment, has found time to acquire the learning and to prosecute the research which this work displays,—and has devoted himself to this object with such praiseworthy perseverance and such marked advantage to the cause of truth,—it presents itself under an aspect doubly interesting to the mind; and we trust the author will meet with that patronage, which as an author and a man, he well deserves.

TO THE READERS OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

AFTER having, for two years, had the entire management of the *Bible Christian*, I am compelled by the pressure of other avocations, to return it to its former conductors. I feel pleasure in being enabled to state, that, while in my hands, its circulation has not diminished, and would indulge a hope that its reputation, as a religious and literary work, will not be found to have materially declined.

To the Subscribers, and to the Contributors, generally, I beg to return my best thanks for their support. There are some among the latter to whom I should have much satisfaction in testifying more particular acknowledgments; but this would, I fear, offend their delicacy. I earnestly solicit a continuance of their favour to my successors in the management.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN will, in future, be published on the *first day* of every month.—In size it will be diminished *one fourth*, and in price *one half*; and it is hoped that efforts will be made by its friends, throughout the country, to procure for it a much more extensive circulation than it has at present, in order to indemnify the proprietors for the risk and sacrifice thus incurred. The work is about to be brought within the reach of almost *every member* of those religious communities, of whose character and interests, it has been a faithful guardian; and of whose sentiments it has been the willing organ. It now remains for them to show, whether there exists among them zeal enough to carry on a work like this with proper spirit and energy; or whether it is to be allowed to languish for want of support. On this point I feel but little apprehension; for I am perfectly convinced that if this appeal be properly enforced by those whose duty it more especially is to take the lead in matters of this kind, it will be responded to, as every appeal of the kind has hitherto been, with alacrity and zeal.

J. SCOTT PORTER,

Belfast, January 1, 1836.



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